The Thesis Committee for Rebecca Adeline Johnston
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

Culture in the Crucible:
Pussy Riot and the Politics of Art in Contemporary Russia

Committee:

Thomas J. Garza, Supervisor

Keith Livers

Culture in the Crucible:
Pussy Riot and the Politics of Art in Contemporary Russia

by

Rebecca Adeline Johnston, B.A.

Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

August 2013

Acknowledgements

I am eternally grateful to my thesis advisors, Dr. Thomas J Garza and Dr. Keith Livers, for their thoughtful input and encouragement on this project. It is because of their interest and guidance that my time at the University of Texas-Austin has been so valuable.

This project would have been inconceivable were it not for many years' worth of inspiration from Dr. Jonathan Brent, who first piqued my interest in Russian history and culture, and Dr. Todd Armstrong, whose kindness, enthusiasm, and support kept me with it. I could not have accomplished what I have today were it not for them.

Culture in the Crucible:
Pussy Riot and the Politics of Art in Contemporary Russia

Rebecca Adeline Johnston, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

Supervisor: Thomas J. Garza

There is a consistent thread throughout Russian history of governmental management of culture. Tsars and Communist bureaucrats alike have sought to variously promote, censor, or exploit writers, filmmakers, and musicians to control and define the country's cultural content. Often, these measures were intended not necessarily to cultivate Russia's aesthetic spirit, but to accomplish specific policy goals. The promotion of a State ideology and other efforts to stave of social unrest were chief among them. With the fall of Soviet power and the loss of an official ideology promoted by the state, the concept of cultural politics fell to the wayside. It has remained largely ignored ever since. Despite numerous high-profile incidents of persecution of the creative class, analysts have not linked them together as part of an overarching cultural policy. However, the Russian government under Vladimir Putin has faced consistent policy challenges since the beginning of the 2000s that could be mitigated through the implementation of such a policy. In some ways, the breadth and character of State involvement in the cultural sphere follows the pattern of the country's autocratic past. In others, it demonstrates that it has adapted these policies to function in the hybrid regime that Putin has created, as opposed to the totalitarian ones that preceded it. A recent case that exemplifies this new breed of cultural policy is the persecution of the radical feminist

punk band Pussy Riot. While largely unknown to many Russian citizens, the group's overt opposition to the patriarchal model of rule established by Putin with the help of the Russian Orthodox Church was met by the most comprehensive crackdown within the cultural sphere since perestroika. Examining this case in detail can reveal the extent to which the Russian government is concerned about its ability to maintain popular legitimacy. The fact that it has continued to try to manage the cultural sphere may indicate the level of democracy that has or has not been established in Russia so far today.

Table of Contents

Introduction

On the day of her parole hearing in July 2013, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, a self-styled conceptual protest street artist, had almost completed her seventeenth month in prison. Several of those initial months had been at a Moscow pre-trial detention facility; the rest were passed in a Mordovian penal colony. During that time, Tolokonnikova refused to take part in a beauty contest, was hospitalized for debilitating headaches, and learned how to sew three hundred and twenty jackets per day. When possible, she would read and take notes. She devoted more time than ever to exercise, and only a month after her initial arrest, declared: "We have become stronger" ["Мы стали сильнее"] (Толоконникова 2012b)[1]. Completing this "we" are Maria Alyokhina and Ekaterina Samutsevich, who together with Tolokonnikova make up the three members of the Russian punk group Pussy Riot. Each was arrested following an impromptu performance at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in early 2012. According to presiding Judge Marina Syrova, their "Punk Prayer" ["Панк-молебен"] constituted

> a gross violation of public order, expressing clear disrespect to society, committed by motivations of religious hatred and enmity and motivations of hatred towards a particular social group by a group of individuals in a premeditated conspiracy.
>
> хулиганство, то есть грубое нарушение общественного порядка, выражающее явное неуважение к обществу, совершенное по мотивам религиозной ненависти и вражды и по мотивам ненависти в отношении какой- либо социальной группы, группой лиц по предварительному сговору. ("Дело №1-170/12")

[1] All English translations juxtaposed with the original Russian are the work of this author.

Convicted of these charges and slapped with two-year prison terms each, these three women became the corollaries of the Russian government's most comprehensive crackdown within the cultural sphere since the end of Soviet power.

Although Russian State persecution of artists, writers, and musicians has its roots in tsarist tradition, it holds a place in the popular imagination as a product of the Communist Party. Countless Soviet cultural figures, including many prominent ones, were denounced, arrested, exiled, or worse during early Bolshevik rule and later under Josef Stalin. Later examples, such as Khrushchev's tirade against Ernst Neizvestny and the Moscow government's order to demolish what came to be known as the Bulldozer Exhibition, marked the continuation of the Soviet government's unambiguous policy of maintaining ideological conformity by "guiding" cultural production. The practical essence of the artistic doctrine of Socialist Realism was that the country would never reach the bright socialist future if it did not pretend that it already had.

After 1991, there was no longer a bright future to work towards, and the need for governmental cultural hegemony had become redundant. Cultural policy as we know it appeared to be over. Much of the prevailing wisdom now is that the largest problem faced by Russia's creative class is a lack of State interest – meaning, a lack of State financing. Cultural figures and critics alike have sounded the alarm of impending privatization that would leave theaters inaccessible to working people and movies tailored to fit only the most banal of pop sensibilities. When artists are arrested, such as those from Voina, there is scant public outcry about the persecution of artists in general. When State television censors musicians, such as Yuri Shevchuk, it is chalked up to widespread political

sensitivities, not a bona fide cultural policy. A meeting between Dmitri Medvedev and a roundtable of aging rock musicians draws some degree of public suspicion, but mostly amusement at what seemed to be the president's attempt to look "cool." That the government has any larger vision for a cultural plan for modern-day Russia appears to many current observers, casual and otherwise, as perhaps even too sophisticated for Russia's leaders to undertake. Interestingly, this skepticism has not spilled over into the analysis of other aspects of contemporary Russian governance; on the contrary, many commentators are rarely shy to compare the policies or practices of Stalin or Brezhnev to those in place under the president today.

As far as the women of Pussy Riot are concerned, cultural politics are essential to the ruling apparatus that Putin has built. In her parole hearing, Tolokonnikova addressed the confluence of art and politics in the three-time president's particular style of rule:

> We in Russia have once again found ourselves in a situation where resistance, and aesthetic resistance not in the least, has turned out to be our singular moral choice and civic duty.
>
> The aesthetic of the Putin regime is a conservative aesthetic, and it gradually, by no accident, tenaciously borrows from and reconstructs the aesthetics of two regimes, which historically precede the current one: the tsarist, imperialist aesthetic and the poorly understood aesthetic of Socialist Realism, with its workers from whatever Uralvagonzavod. This reconstruction is proceeding with such haste and rigidity that the ideological apparatus of the current political regime does not deserve any praise.
>
> Мы вновь в России оказались в таких обстоятельствах, что сопротивление, и не в последнюю очередь сопротивление эстетическое, оказывается нашим единственно нравственным выбором и гражданским долгом.
>
> Эстетика путинского режима – эстетика охранительная, и она не случайно, но последовательно, настырно цитирует и воссоздает эстетики двух

> режимов, исторически предшествующих нынешнему: эстетику царско-имперскую и дурно понятую эстетику соцреализма с его рабочими условного “Уралвагонзавода.” Воссоздание этого производится настолько топорно и нерефлексивно, что идеологические аппараты текущего политрежима не заслуживают никаких похвал. (Толоконникова 2013)

Here, Tolokonnikova links a State-endorsed mode of aesthetics with an unspecified ideological apparatus. Her supposition raises the question: in a constitutionally secular state with seventy years of recent history of moral bankruptcy and ideological disgrace, what use could Putin's government theoretically have for either aesthetics or ideology?

Throughout much of Russia's history of tsarist and Soviet rule, ideology and cultural politics have gone hand in hand. Peter the Great's secularization efforts, Nikolai I's nationality campaign, Alexander II's liberalizing reforms, Lenin's communist vanguard, Khrushchev's thaw, and Gorbachev's perestroika each had some sort of ideological basis. Whether it was socialism, nationalism, or the Orthodox faith, these leaders and others found it helpful in establishing these systems of belief on a popular scale to implement policies within the cultural sphere. Thus, these governments used measures such as the censorship, promotion, persecution, cooptation, and exploitation of writers, filmmakers, musicians, and other creative individuals to control and define their country's cultural content – not for the sake of art itself, but to achieve specific political goals. The establishment of a State-sanctioned ideology is one such goal. If the Kremlin today is seeking to popularize a particular set of beliefs within the country by employing a strategy of aesthetics, it certainly has historical precedent to do so.

History is an essential tool for analyzing the present in any situation, but in the case of Russia, this tool has often been unluckily applied. In both academia and policy, but particularly the latter, casual links between Putin's authoritarian-style rule and Stalin's iron fist have almost reached the level of fetishization. Without judging the merits of these accusations on the whole, it is certainly fair to say that some influences from both Soviet and imperial times are reflected in regime policy and behavior today. However, the presumption that any non-democratic moves on the part of the Kremlin indicate a backtrack to Soviet tactics can be culturally deterministic: the infamous survey placing Stalin as the third-most popular leader in Russia today is cited far too often as an explanation for the election of the country's current leadership. While a historical association with strong-hand rule should be taken into consideration when examining Russia's contemporary political situation, it is a problematic starting point for any type of policy analysis. These presumptions can belie other plausible, and more rationalistic, explanations for current regime behavior. A more useful approach would be to examine the government's root motivations: what policy challenges does it face, and what does it seek to gain.

It is possible to determine whether or not the Russian government is practicing a particularly formulated cultural policy today by examining these same factors. Does it face challenges that can be mitigated through implementing such a policy? On a more basic level, are there actual signs of State involvement in cultural affairs? Asked about the appointment of Vladimir Medinsky as Russia's new cultural minister in May 2012,

Moscow-based art professor Yegor Koshelev argued that it definitely does, and there certainly are:

> I expect that through Medinsky the government will begin to finally implement a gradual cultural policy – something that its representatives have not worried about all these past years. There was no cultural policy in Russia; it did not exist, just as there was no need for one. Culture interests the government in no other way than as an instrument of soft repression or a means for additional self-legitimization, and it, this instrument, is put into action only in the case that there is a genuine necessity. So there – the necessity has become obvious.
>
> Я ожидаю того, что руками Мединского власть начнет наконец реализовывать последовательную культурную политику – то, что все минувшие годы почти не заботило ее представителей. Культурная политика России была никакой, ее просто не было, как не было в ней и необходимости. Культура интересует власть никак иначе, чем в качестве мякого репрессивного инструмента либо средства дополнительной самолегитимизации, и он, этот инструмент, пускается в действие лишь в том случае, когда есть подлинная необходимость. Так вот, необходимость стала очевидной. ("У российской культуры появится политика?" 2012)

These comments, as well as Medinsky's appointment, came at a tumultuous time for the Russian State. The winter prior saw the largest spontaneous mass protests in more than twenty years, providing a hazy backdrop for Putin's third inauguration. Koshelev is correct that cultural politics can help a government legitimize itself; as this paper will discuss, he is incorrect that Putin only began to need to use this strategy since after the demonstrations began.

Coinciding with these protests was the emergence of Pussy Riot itself, a self-styled radical feminist punk band whose performances elevated the concept of the political concert to its most extreme possible form. Many observers refuse to recognize the masked women and their abrasive style as musicians at all, Medinsky chief among them. "Pussy Riot has no relationship to art," he says, "to modern art, to old art, to any

art… They are sitting in jail not as artists, but as hooligans. There is no censorship in the country in any form" (Elder 2012). In his closing trial statement, Pussy Riot defense attorney Nikolai Polozov made the contending point:

> Article 44 is a good part of the Constitution. Everyone is guaranteed the freedom of literary, artistic, scientific, technical, and other forms of creative pursuits and their teachings. But what do we see? We have a punk band. Yes, these young ladies make music, they make art, they make action art. But at some point the government decided that they make it badly, and that it's not permitted. (Polozov 2012, 81-82)

While their form is certainly controversial, Pussy Riot self-identifies first and foremost as a punk music group, and their concerts can be seen as an evolution of the Yeltsin-era tradition of political action art. The Russian government's response to the performance of the "Punk Prayer" can thus provide a recent and relevant case study to examine the state of relations between the government and cultural sphere. Indeed, as this paper will demonstrate, the Pussy Riot case exemplifies a new evolutionary stage in the Russian government's long history of cultural political practice, which reflects a new set of motivations, aspirations, and challenges that has characterized the Kremlin since Putin's first presidential term. To do so, it will begin with an overview of the historical context in which Russian cultural policy has developed, followed by an analysis of the ruling government's current political challenges. It will then discuss contemporary cultural policy developments in the country on the whole before delving into the story of Pussy Riot. This case study will focus on two main features of the group's clash with the

Kremlin's prerogatives: State cooperation with the Orthodox Church and modern-day Russian gender politics.

Chapter 1: A Brief History of Russian Cultural Politics

Russia has a long and proud tradition of State involvement in cultural affairs. Throughout much of the country's imperial history, the tsars took a very direct approach to shaping cultural development, which only later rulers eventually began to delegate to educational and cultural ministries – and then, only in part. The first vestiges of what could broadly be referred to as cultural politics came in the form of a list of banned books in the Izbornik Svyatoslava, dating back to eleventh-century Kievan Rus'.[2] This practice took a more recognizable form under Ivan the Terrible, whose attempt to increase the influence of the tsar and the Russian Orthodox Church in the face of religious heretics led to the creation of the Stoglav. Giving Church officials the right to confiscate manuscripts that did not conform to its standards, the Stoglav constitutes the first censorship document issued by the State in the history of Rus' (Жирков 2001, 9). Ivan's introduction into Russia of the printing press, use primarily to disseminate religious materials, allowed further promotion of the Orthodox faith – and, as a divinely-endowed leader, his own rule. As Gennady Zhirkov describes it, these events marked the beginning of a long period of Church monopolization of censorship.

The ROC's dominance in matters of censorship was only curtailed by the ascension to power of Peter the Great. Few other Russian leaders, if any, more drastically altered their country's very culture. The Petrine reforms touched upon virtually all aspects of the Russian way of life, shifting the focus of cultural development from Byzantine

[2] For more on the Izbornik, see Кобяк.

religious tradition to Western secular modernization, with a strong focus on the sciences.[3] Peter limited Church influence by refusing to appoint a successor to the deceased Patriarch Adrian and attempting to lighten the repression of the same heretical sects that Ivan IV had fought against, and hence "opened the path to religious tolerance" ["открывал путь к веротерпимости"] (16). Censorship now fell under the purview of secular governmental entities, often the tsar himself:

> As an editor and publisher, Peter personally directed book production in accordance with his political and educational goals. Not a single line went through the printing press that was not at his utmost discretion.
>
> Как редактор и издатель Петр самолично направлял книжное производство согласно своим политическим и просветительным целям. Ни одна строка не выходила из-под печатного станка без его высочайшего усмотрения. (17)

These moves both strengthened the tsar's own position and cut back on the stifling effect that the Church had been exerting on Russia's cultural development (15). Although these reforms had little effect on Russia outside of its urban centers, their essence can still be felt in much of the architecture, museums, and character of St. Petersburg today.

Fashioning herself as a successor to Peter, Catherine the Great promoted further implementation of Western models of the arts, sciences, and education. The Hermitage Museum and its colossal collection of Western art is perhaps her most prominent legacy in this regard. While the several rulers between Peter and Catherine's reigns had

[3] While Peter is often touted for having opened a "Window to the West," it is important to keep in mind that he had no desire to Westernize Russia, per se; rather, he sought to borrow aspects of Western life that could be adopted to strengthen the Russian empire.

significantly relaxed State censorship (23), Catherine presided over the simultaneous State promotion and regulation of journalism and literature. As Zhirkov explains:

> One can note within her censorship policy a general evolution over the course of her entire reign, which lead the empress to the necessity to synthesize the existing legislative record on limiting freedom of speech and press, and to organize official censorship within the state during that time, inscribing it into law.
>
> В ее цензурной политике просматривается общая эволюция на протяжении всею царствования, которая привела императрицу к необходимости обобщить предшествующий законодательный опыт по ограничению свободы слова и печати, организовать в государстве тех лет официальную цензуру, узаконить ее. (23)

These responsibilities were in part delegated to the Russian Academy of Sciences, which Catherine blamed for "selling books that go against the law, good manners, ours as well as those of the Russian nation" ["продают такие книги, которые против закона, доброго нрава, нас самих и российской нации"] (Лютова 1999, 4). While the Academy and the Governing Senate were responsible for overseeing the censorship of secular documents, Catherine put the Holy Synod in charge of doing the same for religious ones. Part of her aforementioned policy evolution was its increasing strictness: In the last year of her life, Catherine abolished the same 1783 law allowing independent publishing presses that she had introduced.

According to Vasily Sipovsky, the reasons for established regulations for censorship are obvious:

> ...fear of revolution, dread for Russian society, which had turned out to be excessively susceptible to Western political movements, all of this forced Catherine to enter the battle against 'pre-revolutionary' literature, French, German,

> English, and to use censorship to take away the keys to the libraries of her subjects.
>
> ...страх перед революцией, боязнь за русское общество, которое оказалось чересчур восприимчивым к политическим движениям Запада, все это заставило Екатерину вступить в борьбу с "дореволюционной" литературой, французской, немецкой, английской, и при помощи цензуры забрать в руки ключи от библиотек своих подданных. (4)

Given this explanation, it is logical enough that Catherine's successor, Pavel I, "developed and perfected" ["развивал и совершенствовал"] (Жирков 2001, 31) the censorship structures that she had created. What Paul Foote refers to as "the then prevailing fear of book-inspired revolution" led to a dramatic decline in publishing and a ban on all imported books (Foote 2003, 1). These measures were only relaxed under Alexander I, whose 1804 censorship statute was supposedly meant "not to impinge on freedom of thought or expression, but to defend that freedom from abuse" (1). As Foote explains, the tsar soon disposed of his initial good intentions for a new censorship regime overseen by the Ministry of the Police, as opposed to the initially-responsible Ministry of Education, out of concern for the effectiveness of the initial measures (2).

Perhaps no Russian tsar evokes a stronger association with authoritarian control of cultural affairs, however, than Nikolai I. It was under this sovereign that cultural politics first took on the ideological and personalistic quality that Soviet leaders later adopted in earnest. In 1833, Minister of Education Sergei Uvarov proposed a doctrine of "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality" ["Православие, самодержавие, народность"] to be adopted as official State ideology. The proclamation came in the wake of the Decembrist Revolt and just as Russian intellectuals were beginning to develop what came

to be known as the Slavophiles versus Westernizers debate. It essentially placed the State in the Slavophile camp, and, as Theodore Levin explains, represented a new stage in the recent tsarist trend of combating potentially revolutionary literature:

> Viewed through the filter of democratic ideas, Uvarov's narodnost' was reactionary: it defended serfdom, stressed obedience to the czar, and condoned mass illiteracy as a means of preventing social unrest. (Levin 1996, 31)

This doctrine can be considered an element of official cultural policy insofar as it was expected to permeate all aspects of Russian life.

Like Peter the Great before him, Nikolai took the enforcement of this concept as a personal responsibility. As a result, Alexander Pushkin found himself in direct contact with the tsar, who personally oversaw the publication of his works to the exclusion of any other censorship organs. In a remarkable display of oxymoronic communication, Alexander von Benckendorff assured Pushkin that "there will be no censorship of [your writings]. The Sovereign emperor himself will be the first judge and censor of your works" ["на них нет никакой цензуры. Государь император сам будет первым ценителем произведений ваших и цензором"] (Жирков 2001, 65). Soon after, Pushkin himself remarked: "The Tsar has freed me from censorship. He is my censor" ["Царь освободил меня от цензуры. Он сам – мой цензор"] (65). His reverence for the tsar as personal censor was unironic. Indeed, he defended the need for censorship in "Thoughts on the Road" ["Мысли на дороге"], arguing that freedom is best experienced "within the confines of the law" ["в пределах закона"] (Пушкин 1833-1835). Pushkin further differentiated between what he saw as two forms of freedom: political and spiritual

[“политическая” and “духовная”], and claimed that “to live without political freedom is very possible,” [“Без политической свободы жить очень можно”] (Лотман), while the latter is not. These sentiments are confirmed in his poem “To Friends” [“Друзьям”], where he sincerely admits to having “fallen in love” with the tsar [“Его я просто полюбил”] (Пушкин 1828) and defends himself against accusations of hypocrisy.

While unique for its time, Pushkin's relationship with State authority provides an interesting window into Nikolai I's attitude towards cultural figures in general. With the poet's fame preceding his own coronation, this relationship, relative to the tsar's dealings with other writers, called for particular sensitivity. His close supervision of Pushkin was merited by the fact that the poet's works were often overtly political in nature. This was the case both before his exile under Alexander I, such as with his several poems to Pyotr Chaadayev[4] and the Decembrists, many of whom were his friends, and afterwards, as with the elegy “André Chénier” [“Андрей Шенье”].[5] Generally problematic for the authoritarian tsar were Pushkin's common poetic themes of “freedom” and “will” [“свобода,” “воля”], as was his criticism of governmental despotism: “under the oppression of fatal power / Intolerable to the soul,” “Unjust power everywhere,” “We toppled the tsars,” [“под гнетом власти роковой / Нетерпеливою душой,” “Везде неправедная Власть,” “Мы свергнули царей”] and so on. In regards to one of his most famous poems, Pushkin describes Nikolai I's reaction to the Bronze Horseman in his diary:

[4] For more on Pushkin's poems to Chaadayev, see Glazov (1986) and Peterson (1997).
[5] For more on this poem, see Sandler (1983).

> "The Bronze Horseman" has been returned to me with the Sovereign's notes. The word idol doesn't pass the supreme level of censorship; the lines
>
> And before the young capital
> Old Moscow faded
> Like a widow cloaked in violet
> Before the new tsarina
>
> are crossed out. There are (?) in many places – all of this makes a big difference to me. I am obliged to change the conditions with Smirdin.
>
> Мне возвращен «Медный всадник» с замечаниями Государя. Слово кумир не пропущено высочайшей цензурою; стихи
>
> И перед младшею столицей
> Померкла старая Москва,
> Как перед новою царицей
> Порфироносная вдова –
>
> вымараны. На многих местах поставлен (?),– все это делает мне большую разницу. Я принужден был переменить условия со Смирдиным.[6] (Жирков 2001, 66)

The decision to excise these lines demonstrates the tsar's understandable unease at equating a departing tsar with the morose image of a widow.

While there is general consensus among scholars that Pushkin's esteem for the tsar was genuine, there is less agreement about the tsar's own thoughts. Some writers point out that Nikolai is known to have intervened on Pushkin's behalf,[7] while many others characterize his attitude as one of calculated condescension and hypocrisy (Жирков 2001). Several facts are certain, however. That the tsar granted Pushkin permission to violate a prohibition on duels – provided he die as a Christian – promptly

[6] Pushkin is referring here to book publisher Alexander Smirdin.
[7] See Жирков (2001) and Shein (1968).

led to his death. Mikhail Lermontov later argued that it was indeed Pushkin's naivety towards those who surrounded him that brought about his end:

> For what did he give his hand to slanderers, trifling,
> For what did he trust their words and kindness, lying,
> He who since his youth has understood his fellow man?...
>
> Зачем он руку дал клеветникам ничтожным,
> Зачем поверил он словам и ласкам ложным,
> Он, с юных лет постигнувший людей?... (Лермонтов 1837, 10)

Although these lines from Lermontov's "Death of a Poet" ["Смерть поэта"] do not cite the government itself, the poem goes on to say:

> You, voracious crowd around the throne,
> Hangmen of Freedom, Genius and Glory!
> You hide beneath the shadow of the law.
>
> Вы, жадною толпой стоящие у трона,
> Свободы, Гения и Славы палачи!
> Таитесь вы под сению закона. (10)

If there was any doubt that these additional lines[8] were meant to indict the aristocracy in Pushkin's death, they were stamped out when the sovereign cited them in his personal order for the poet to be arrested and sent into exile to the Caucasus (Parthé 2004, 116) ("Резолюцая Николая I"). Furthermore, the tsar restricted access to Pushkin's funeral, fearing that the event might devolve into a popular uprising, and buried him in secret. Taken as a whole, the story of Pushkin's short life epitomizes Nikolai I's implementation of the "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality" doctrine in the cultural sphere. Pushkin had

[8] Lermontov added these lines later.

the utmost respect for nationality and autocracy, and was willing to submit to Orthodoxy at the tsar's request. Nevertheless, Pushkin's works, and even his funeral, remained subject to imperious censorship in the name of, as Levin puts it, preventing social unrest. The revolutions of 1848 only intensified this type of State intervention (Foote 2003, 3).

The story of censorship in Russia under Alexander II is complex. Broadly speaking, his ascension marked a relaxation of government intrusion in the publishing world (Frank 1986, 20). These reforms were to last until the Revolution of 1905. Despite this relaxation, Alexander II transferred censorship oversight from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of the Interior, redefining the function of this practice from the promotion of enlightenment to, as Foote explains, "polic[ing] the press in the interests of the state" (Foote 2003, 3). In his study of censorship mandates from 1865 to 1904, Foote further identifies six main categories of materials deemed unfit for public consumption. Almost all of them concern the protection of "the established order," in both the political and religious realms. Alexander's policy testifies to continued government fear of literary social revolt – which, considering the rampant terrorism that characterized late nineteenth century Russia, was not unreasonable. Although this particular innovation generally takes a back seat to discussion of the tsar's abolishment of serfdom and liberalization in the legislative and judicial realms, it underscores the primacy State authorities placed on the written word.

Given that much Russian literature during Alexander II's reign was rife with social and political commentary, these measures were equally problematic for the press as they were for literary writers. Fyodor Dostoevsky, for example, was constantly bogged

down by censorship delays, often due to accusations that were seemingly inane but in fact pointed out legitimate threats from the State's point of view – again, out of concern for social unrest. Joseph Frank points out a case in 1861 of one censor's fear that Dostoevsky's portrayal of Russian prisons was so positive as to possibly incite "[i]ndividuals who are not morally developed," such as destitute peasants, to commit a crime, such as to rise up against their landowners (Frank 1986, 29). All things considered, Alexander II's governance of the cultural sphere followed in the well-trod tsarist tradition of preemptive strikes on civil rebellion. The main substantive difference was his abandonment of ideological overtones in favor of mere policing.

The Revolution of 1905 brought with it some further relaxation of censorship, but the most dramatic shift in Russian cultural policy came with the February Revolution in 1917. The Provisional Government officially abolished all censorship for the first time in the country's history. This victory, however, was not to last. Almost immediately upon seizing power, the Bolsheviks instituted what became one of the most complex programs of state cultural policy ever conceived by man. Countless volumes have been written to document this phenomenon. While much of the discussion focuses on Stalin-era Socialist Realism, the ideological roots for Soviet governance of cultural production were formed in the early 1920s. Leon Trotsky outlines the initial foundations for this policy in Literature and Revolution:

> The Party guides the proletariat, not the historical process. There are spheres where the Party guides directly and imperiously. There are spheres where it monitors and assists. There are spheres where it only assists. And there are, finally, spheres where it is simply trying to find its bearings. The sphere of art is not one

> where the Party is called upon to command. It can and must safeguard, assist, and only indirectly – guide. (Clark 2007, 33)

As Katerina Clark points out, "indirectly guide" must be understood here as "to define the 'political course' in the cultural sphere" (33). She adds that this course, as far as it concerned culture, changed several times even during Stalin's rule. However, the professed desire to exert "control over the sphere of 'cultural production'" (33) remained a distinguishing factor of cultural policy throughout the Soviet era.

As alluded to in Trotsky's passage, the Communist Party, as in many other areas of Soviet governance, played the foremost role in defining cultural policy. It thus took over responsibilities that had previously been assigned to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of the Police, Ministry of the Interior, or that individual sovereigns had exercised themselves. This new state of affairs marked a departure from the government's behavior as a body that "interfered" with matters of culture to one that guided them in the spirit of Trotsky's dictum. It was similar in that many decisions were made by members of the Politburo and regional Party leaders (xi), even after the introduction of various organizations that also fulfilled censorship functions. Not unlike Nikolai I, early Soviet leaders saw themselves as representatives of an ideology that they needed to instill throughout the country (xii). Given the importance of culture in the socialization of youth (Pilkington 1994, 103), the cultural sphere was a primary battleground in which to accomplish this task. The Bolshevik's urgent need to establish legitimacy after taking power in a coup d'état made the need for victory only more acute. Indeed, "in the last analysis," Clark argues,

> the sphere of culture and ideology was the sphere of legitimation of the state. [...] The process of legitimation required using refined techniques for manipulating mass consciousness. It is hard to exaggerate the role of culture in this process. (Clark 2007, xii)

Thus, for example, Vladimir Lenin, Vyacheslav Molotov, and Nikolai Bukharin debated with Maxim Gorky and Anatoly Lunacharsky over travel restrictions for Fyodor Sologub and Alexander Blok[9] as a matter of regular business.

Aside from the Politburo, there were a variety of agencies in the Soviet Union responsible for cultural guidance: Glavlit, Goskomizdat, Goskino, Gosteleradio, Glavpolitprosvet, Glavrepertkom, Glaviskusstvo, Narkomproc, and the varyingly-named security service apparatus. Their practical functions and levels of influence evolved over the course of Soviet history in conjunction with the prevailing political climate, as Kathleen Parthé eloquently describes:

> Given the state's agenda, what constituted a 'dangerous text' during the Soviet era? In the mid-1920s it could be a biting satire on the awkward first years of the new society, or an expression of fears for its future. Ten years later, after the satirists and the avant-garde had been silenced, it might be a realistic work that failed to embrace the radiant future with sufficient enthusiasm, or the unwritten work of an author who thought silence was preferable to producing an unconvincing lie. ...in the late 1940s, when Communism coopted elements of Russian chauvinism, artistic and critical writing had to pass ideological and ethnic loyalty tests, making the chance of failure that much higher. (Parthé 2004, 45-46)

Despite these developments, the Soviet Union's structures of cultural "guidance" were consistently meant to ensure that all cultural products conformed to increasing levels of

[9] As a result of this bureaucratic snafu, Blok died.

ideological purity. The sheer breadth of these organizations demonstrates the precision with which the Soviet authorities sought to shape the cultural sphere.

While all Soviet leaders had some hand in personally directing cultural affairs, none delved into this task with such zeal as Josef Stalin. His inclination to inoculate the arts with nationalistic fervor appears to have been inborn. His poem "Morning" ("დილა"), published in 1895 when young Dzhugashvili was sixteen years old, demonstrates this trait:

> The pinkish bud has opened,
> Rushing to the pale-blue violet
> And, stirred by a light breeze,
> The lily of the valley has bent over the grass.
>
> The lark has sung in the dark blue,
> Flying higher than the clouds
> And the sweet-sounding nightingale
> Has sung a song to children from the bushes
>
> Flower, oh my Georgia!
> Let peace reign in my native land!
> And may you, friends, make renowned
> Our Motherland by study! (Service 2004, 38)
>
> ვარდს გაეფურჩქნა კოკორი,
> გადაჰხვეოდა იასა,
> ზამბახსაც გაჰღვიძებოდა
> და თავს უხრიდა ნიავსა.
>
> ტოროლა მაღლა ღრუბლებში
> წკრიალ-წკრიალით ჰგალობდა,
> ბულბულიც, გრძნობით აღსილი,
> ნაზის ხმით ამას ამბობდა:
>
> ,,აჰყვავდი ტურფა ქვეყანავ,

ილხინე, ივერთ მხარეო,
და შენც, ქართველო, სწავლითა
სამშობლო გაახარეო!“. (მახობეშვილი)

For Stalin, it was natural for a lyrical illustration of springtime blooms to morph into patriotic didacticism. By the time he had consolidated power in the late 1920s, the leader's immersion into the lives of the Soviet Union's literary community was fully under way. Benedict Sarnov's four massive volumes of his “Сталин и писатели” series themselves testify to the extensive amount of time that Stalin spent reviewing Soviet texts and corresponding with their authors.

As noted earlier, the path along which Stalin steered the Soviet literary establishment diverged at times from the one first set forth by early Bolshevik leaders. Stalin defined some of his views on the appropriate way to characterize the country's authors to a group of Ukrainian writers in 1929:

> Excuse me, but I cannot demand that a writer necessarily be a Communist and necessarily toe the Party line. [...] Is literature actually Party-oriented? It is not Party-oriented, of course; literature is much broader than the Party, and its standards should be different, more general. There one can speak of the proletarian character of literature, of the anti-proletarian, of the worker-peasant character, of the anti-worker-peasant character, of revolutionary, non-revolutionary, of Soviet, anti-Soviet. To demand that a fiction writer and author toe the Party line – then all of the non-Party members would have to be kicked out. Is this true or not?
>
> Извините, я не могу требовать от литератора, чтобы он обязательно был коммунистом и обязательно проводил партийную точку зрения. [...] Разве литература партийная? Это же не партийная, конечно, это гораздо шире литература, чем партия, и там мерки должны быть другие, более общие. Там можно говорить о пролетарском характере литературы, об антипролетарском, о рабоче-крестьянском характере, об антирабоче-крестьянском характере, о революционном, не революционном, о советском,

> антисоветском. Требовать, чтобы беллетристическая литература и автор проводили партийную точку зрения, – тогда всех беспартийных надо изгонять. Правда это или нет? (Сарнов 2008, 426)

The impetus for this discussion was Mikhail Bulgakov's "Days of the Turbins" ["Дни Турбиных"], a play with the ignoble distinction of being Stalin's favorite. The crux of his argument was this: although Bulgakov is certainly a "different man" ["чужой он человек"] (425), his play was useful to the regime since the main impression it leaves with the audience is "the indestructible force of the Bolsheviks" ["несокрушимой силы большевиков"] (426). Thus, at least at that time, Stalin was ostensibly willing to tolerate a book that presents an otherwise caustic portrait of the October Revolution. His conclusion about the impression left by the book is, of course, entirely subjective; indeed, his analysis of Bulgakov in general was not shared by contemporary literary critics. Plagued by an unbearable barrage of negative press, Bulgakov famously penned a letter to the Soviet government, lamenting his inability to find work and pleading to be allowed to go abroad. Stalin's subsequent phone call to the bewildered writer, rejecting his travel request but promising to get him a job at the Moscow Art Theater, testifies to the extent that Stalin's personal preferences shaped Soviet literature in its formative years.

Although the Soviets felt that literature played a primary role in the propagandization of communist ideology, Stalin's control over cultural development was in no way limited to that sphere. Indeed, Clark points out the Soviet archival documents released only after the fall of the Soviet Union demonstrate that "there was virtually not a single ideological (and therefore cultural) question before the Politburo in which the

decision was not made by him, or was made without his knowledge (and therefore assent)" (Clark 2007, 140). It was Stalin, for example, who presided over the commission that formulated Socialist Realism in 1932 and coined the term itself.[10] He and most other Party leaders were also heavily involved in the 1934 Writer's Union Congress, during which Socialist Realism was given its canonical definition by Maxim Gorky and Andrei Zhdanov (139, 162). As laid out in a transcript of that congress:

> Socialist realism, as one of the basic methods of soviet artistic literature and literary criticism, demands from the artist the truthful, historically concrete portrayal of reality in its revolutionary development. This truthfulness and historical concreteness in the artistic portrayal of reality must correspond with the tasks of ideal reconfiguration and nurturing in the spirit of socialism.
>
> Социалистический реализм, являясь основным методом советской художественной литературы и литературной критики, требует от художника правдивого, исторически-конкретного изображения действительности в её революционном развитии. Причём правдивость и историческая конкретность художественного изображения действительности должны сочетаться с задачей идейной переделки и воспитания в духе социализма. ("Первый всесоюзный съезд")

Although directed here at writers, the country's leadership declared Socialist Realism to be the uniting doctrine for all producers of culture. Indeed, it is perhaps most recognizable today in paintings such as Boris Vladimirsky's "Roses for I.V. Stalin" or, from the vozhd's favorite painter, Alexander Gerasimov, "I.V. Stalin and K.E. Voroshilov in the Kremlin." The above definition was augmented following the purges in 1936-1938 with a demand for "Soviet patriotism," and particularly narodnost' in all its forms (Clark

[10] For an extended account of Stalin's role in this process, see Clark 2004, 162-165.

2007, 260).[11] This addition again harks back to Nikolai I's doctrine of nationalism, testifying to a recurring authoritarian trend in Russian cultural governance that seeks to increase popular love for country.

After Stalin's death, Soviet cultural governance took a dramatic shift. Nikita Khrushchev's thaw included a temporary tolerance for what came to be known as non-conformist art. Although the government's attitude was only tolerant in relation to Stalin-era practice, artists experienced an increased degree of freedom for about a decade to produce works that deviated from the standards of Socialist Realism. Major museums put on public exhibitions of these "unofficial" Soviet artists, as well as European painters like Pablo Picasso and Paul Cézanne. Tensions between the artistic community and government remained, however, and a 1962 modern art exhibition commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Union of Moscow Artists at the State Exhibition Hall proved to be the last straw. Upon seeing the abstract paintings displayed a stone's throw from the Kremlin, Khrushchev decried the works as "dog shit" and "asshole art" and threatened to expel the artists to Siberia (Zubok 2009, 191). The cultural respite was over.

Khrushchev's crackdown came at a time when rock music was beginning to overshadow literature as the primary battleground in Soviet cultural policy. Many publications castigated it as "a Western 'plot' to undermine Soviet society" (Ramet 1994, 186) by supposedly boosting feelings of nihilism and cynicism among the country's youth. Even in their early days as cloying but politically benign pop singers, the Beatles were

[11] Clark identifies a number of meanings for narodnost': popular, folk, of the common man, people's, national, and state.

perceived as a serious threat by the government and conservative cultural establishment. Kolya Vasin, a music collector who founded Russia's largest Beatles museum, explained the profound effect the British group first had on him: “All the depression and fear ingrained over the years disappeared. I understood that everything other than the Beatles had been oppression” (182). For his part, Khrushchev felt that all music “should ennoble the individual and arouse him to action,” whereas the Beatles only inspired “indecent” dance moves (183). This particular reaction is representative of the prevailing governmental attitude that the behavior and lifestyle surrounding these songs was just as subversive, if not more, than the songs themselves. The Soviet authorities were thus responsible for politicizing rock music, which itself was often devoid of any political content (208).

The controversy over music went on to dominate the culture wars of the Brezhnev era, as an aging Soviet leadership continued to fight for ideological hegemony with increasing ineffectiveness. Policies in other areas of culture were actively backfiring, as happened when backlash against the Moscow government’s demolition of the “Bulldozer Exhibit” helped underground art to gain domestic and international popularity (Zubok 2009, 326). Even after Communist Party leaders ousted Khrushchev from power, his hidebound musical convictions remained popular with each general secretary up through Konstantin Chernenko. The menace, as they saw it, was growing by the day: while the bands that originally worried cultural conservatives were mostly Western imports, home-grown Soviet rockers such as Akvarium and Mashina Vremeni were gaining notoriety by the early 1970s. This was in part due to the new US-Soviet policy of détente, which

opened up more opportunities for young people to become exposed to Western rock (Frisby 1989, 4). Soviet authorities were reticent to ban the genre altogether, both because of its massive popularity and possibly harming détente. Thus, they employed more subtle tactics to marginalize ideologically devious bands (Pilkington 1998, 371). Repertory commissions would order increased stage time for "mass song" by performers like Yosef Kobzon that was both nostalgic and, as Russian and Soviet rulers have often found advantageous to promote, patriotic (Stites 1993, 154-155). Charged with organizing the productive use of teenage leisure time, the Komsomol would attempt to monopolize the disco scene with harmless "VIAs" (vocal-instrumental ensembles) such as Vesyolye Rebyata (162). The massive cultural industry that had risen up around the breed of the "useful" musician was more than happy to collaborate with the State in its own self-promotion – indeed, the surge in rock music was eating into its profits. However, they did not do so in good faith. As Richard Stites puts it:

> But since the thirst for money is not an alluring banner to fight under, some composers masked it behind the façade of culture, morality, and ideological righteousness. They called rockers 'illiterate' charlatans and pronounced their music non-musical, indecent, and unpatriotic. (163)

The disingenuity of such refrains indicates that mass musicians were closely in tune with the larger demands of the Soviet State, which sought to ensure political conformity through cultural – and thus social – engineering. Its job was made easier by the fact that many Soviet citizens felt a nationalistic – or sometimes even religious – nostalgia for what already seemed to be a bygone era of easier times, sentiments that were ripe for

exploitation. That bureaucrats disguised this process under the banner of "building socialism" was as inauthentic as the concerns within the Union of Soviet Composers about the supposed indecency of their competitors. A song by Mashina Vremeni called "Full Calm" ("Полный штиль") is evidence that the Soviet youth were savvy to this hypocrisy: "But nobody believes there's no wind in the world / Even if they've banned the wind" ("Но никто не верит в то, что на свете ветра нет / Даже если ветер запретили"). What Vladislav Zubok calls the "moral bankruptcy" of the Soviet cultural elites was becoming progressively more apparent.

The growing polarization of Soviet society from the late 1970s through perestroika contributed to harsher repression of unofficial culture. Reactionary nationalist groups such as Pamyat' equated rock music to Satanism and called for more respect for Lenin. Sergei Mikhalkov, the iconic lyricist of the Soviet hymn, echoed this sentiment by demonizing rock as "the moral equivalent of AIDS" (Ramet 1994, 189). As had been the case since the days of the Bolsheviks, the Communist Party played a significant role in formulating policy on these matters as well as adding to the caustic rhetoric (190). With the invasion of Afghanistan and détente officially over, the Ministry of Culture eschewed its former tactics and issued an official blacklist of musical groups to be banned from dance halls in 1984. It was one of many signals of the government's growing desperation to maintain cultural heterogeneity.

Only under Gorbachev was there a relaxation of official cultural policy. Like all perestroika-era reforms, cultural liberalization was intended to strengthen the Soviet Union, not discredit it altogether. Unfortunately for Gorbachev, the latter turned out to be

the case. The last secretary general the high arts in general and only expressed disdain for punk music in particular. Structurally, he swapped out hard-liners from the Ministry of Culture in favor of more progressive figures. Many non-conformist musicians gained official sanction and, as Soviet power began to crumble, held political concerts. Soviet filmmakers figured first among the cultural intelligentsia to take advantage of the liberalizing climate to undergo administrative restructuring, and turned out to be a bellwether both for other cultural figures and the very political catastrophe that the Soviet Union was soon to undergo. In lieu of exerting control over its members, the Filmmakers Union switched to a role of coordination and representation. In a remarkable departure from socialist dogma, they stressed the need for private initiative, the free market, and foreign participation, and succeeded in expanding both economically and artistically (Stites 1993). Judging by these and similar developments in other fields, it became clear that the government's decades of work to solidify cultural and ideological conformity in the Soviet Union had failed.

There is a consistent thread throughout Russian history of State control of civilian behavior. Often, this control has taken the form of ideology. Tsars and Party bureaucrats alike have sought to unite their populations by promoting a greater good, be it God, country, or the promise of a socialist future. Lacking democratic legitimacy, these regimes depended on popular deference to these values to ensure their own survival. To some extent, this strategy is par for the course for any autocratic regime. However, the extent to which Russian rulers have turned to cultural affairs to attempt to accomplish this feat is perhaps unique in world history. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian

State faced the same task of establishing legitimacy. Whether or not the government has continued the methods of cooptation, exploitation, and repression within the cultural sphere that their predecessors prudently relied on may indicate the level of democracy that has or has not been established in Russia so far today.

Chapter 2: Putin's Vertical of Power: Challenges and Goals

That Russia under Putin has been steadily peddling backwards towards Soviet-style authoritarianism has become such a common trope over the past several years that it is already practically taken for granted. It is a generalized assessment: the United Russia party holds a monopoly over the political landscape, civil rights take a back seat to maintaining "order" where oppositionists loom, and the State maintains control of vital industry and media enterprises. Glib comparisons to Soviet tactics to assert social and political hegemony are nearly as ubiquitous in the Western media as they are among analysts and academics.

The fact that post-Soviet Russia has transitioned from a single-party state to a one that technically allows for multiple parties means that any attempts by the government to exercise this type of hegemony must necessarily be altered. The offhand remarks about Russia's return to authoritarianism that dominate the rhetoric on this issue do not give enough credit to the Putin regime's ingenuity in formulating a new mode of government that grants it sufficient legitimacy as a democracy to function as a global leader while still retaining many authoritarian traits. Graeme B. Robertson proposes that Putin's Russia is essentially a self-sustaining hybrid regime, one that stopped halfway during the transition from authoritarianism to democracy and is no longer moving in either direction. This model provides a useful framework to examine the numerous practices by the Russian government that appear to hark back to Soviet practices, but are actually motivated by entirely different factors.

This chapter is intended to discuss the ways in which the hybrid regime instituted by Vladimir Putin in Russia today is still in the process of solidifying popular legitimacy and faces growing threats to its political monopoly. It argues that the political tools that Putin has employed in these efforts so far – creating an imposed consensus among potential political rivals, fashioning a dominant-party state, and establishing a power vertical to provide a backbone for the regime – face long-term challenges that will eventually need to be addressed. By examining the development of these challenges over the course of Putin's presidency, premiership, and back again, this chapter will identify possible strategies that the Russian State is likely to utilize in its quest for self-preservation.

Robertson defines Russia's current status as a hybrid regime by examining the dynamics of political protest in the country. As a state that is neither completely authoritarian nor making any particularly notable strides towards full democracy, Russia, Robertson says, is an intentionally hybrid regime that uses democratic trappings to legitimize its control of the protest activities of its population. To demonstrate how this control is exerted, he uses a combination of theory on hybrid regimes, statistical evidence showing a correlation between protests and the three aforementioned factors, and an analysis of Putin-era practices to gain a firm grip over civil society. His framework is useful here for dispelling the popular myth that authoritarian moves by the Russian government represent a desire by Putin to backtrack towards Soviet-style rule. Casting aside this cliché opens up room to explore alternative motivations for the admittedly undemocratic behavior of the Russian State.

Following the high elite fragmentation that characterized Russian politics throughout the 1990s, the Putin administration set to work instituting the so-called "power vertical" that would reestablish the Kremlin's authority and control over regional governors, security forces, and labor unions (Robertson 2011). It would also convince the fractured elites that bandwagoning with the regime – and reaping the oil and other rents that have become so ubiquitously associated with Putin – would be preferable to the political isolation they would otherwise face. Understood within Higley, Bayulgen and George's elite typology (Higley 2003), the Putin regime is an ideocratic elite with high integration and low differentiation, resulting in a diminished capacity for opposition activity (Dahl 1966, Gel'man 2003). This "imposed consensus" of elites kept any potential political rivals from successfully employing any of their three possible strategies, "exit," "voice," or "loyalty" (Gel'man 2008, Hirschman 1970), leaving them co-opted or damaged, and definitively marginalized (Gel'man 2008). In addition, as Gel'man points out, strong presidentialism creates an inherently unfavorable environment for opposition activity, especially when combined with the electoral reforms passed in 2005: a higher threshold to enter the State Duma (from 5% to 7%), a ban on coalitions, and stricter rules for registering political parties (Gel'man 2003). Together, these policies proved to be a successful formula to allow the Kremlin to create a monopoly on power.

It is within this framework that United Russia plays such a key role in supporting Putin's power vertical. According to Barbara Geddes, the most enduring authoritarian regimes are based on parties (Geddes 2003). This is likely the logic behind building Russia into something resembling a dominant party state. Whether or not it exactly

qualifies as such a state is somewhat contentious, but the concept is still helpful for examining its party system. Kenneth Greene's definition – by far the most thorough – understands dominant party systems as "hybrids that combine genuine elections with continuous executive and legislative rule by a single party for at least twenty consecutive years or four consecutive elections," in a context of meaningful electoral competition (Greene 2007). While United Russia has only been in existence since 2001, its sizeable monopoly over regional and federal elections is evidence trending in that direction. Although electoral reform greatly hindered most opposition parties from registering, there are few that were banned outright, and those were on the basis of being qualified as "extremist" such as the National Bolshevik Party.[12]

Greene's theory also explains why many of the opposition parties that do exist, such as the Communist Party, the Liberal-Democratic Party, and Yabloko, are so blatantly non-centrist. Little room is left for any theoretical coalition building or joint policy promotion, leaving aside the fact that most of these parties are uninterested in flouting Kremlin initiatives. "As a result," Greene explains, "opposition parties will be undersupplied even when there is sufficient voter demand, permissive electoral institutions, and enough ideological space for them to become viable competitors" (Greene 2007). Important here is that ideological space is one thing that post-Soviet Russia does not lack. United Russia exists more as a pragmatic entity to maintain its own dominance than one motivated by any particular vision of the future (Gel'man 2008).

[12] The Russian government's use of "extremism" to persecute and marginalize oppositionists, activists, and other groups and individuals that threaten its political hegemony will be discussed in the proceeding chapters.

This flexible, centrist approach initially allowed it to appeal to a broad range of voters. A quick look at the party website reveals plenty of examples of this tendency: one party member recently proclaimed that the 2012 May Day celebration, which saw upwards of 150,000 people take to the streets of Moscow, is "for us a symbol of unity" ["для нас является символом единства"] (Neverov 2012). For sure, only a great deal of ideological flexibility could allow a party to claim unity within a mass of people dominated by Communist supporters and Eduard Limonov.

Whether or not Russia has a dominant party system per se, United Russia is certainly a dominant party. After the 2007 State Duma elections, when United Russia landed 64.3% of the vote,[13] it secured a super-majority capable of passing constitutional amendments with no extra-party support. The same year, Putin took over as head of the party, and Dmitri Medvedev was sworn in as president months later. The tone for the party for the upcoming term had already been set by Vladislav Surkov in 2006, who stated that United Russia should look to achieve "domination" ["доминирование"] for at least the proceeding ten to fifteen years. Losing power any earlier, he warned, could push Russia off its designated path and result in "entirely unclear consequences" ["совершенно неясными последствиями"] (Surkov 2006). Ironically, Surkov went out of his way to justify long-term party domination as a democratic institution, referring to Japan's Liberal Democrats and the Swedish Social Democrats (both of which Greene categorizes as

[13] The next closest party, the Communists, came in at 11.57%.

dominant party systems) as perfectly legitimate forty-year regimes. “No problem,” he remarked. “It's normal” [“Ничего, нормально”] (Surkov 2006).

With legislation and institutions that had so far successfully marginalized the political opposition, there was not much need for Medvedev to introduce new policies to keep the party on top. The effect of the aforementioned factors was so strong that there was even room for the Kremlin to ease up on certain electoral restrictions, if only cosmetically. Most notably, amendments passed in 2009 lowered the number of signatures needed to run for parliament from 200,000 to 150,000 in 2011, and then to 120,000 in subsequent elections. Another measure was also introduced to allow a party that gains between five and six percent of the vote to have one seat in the Duma, and two for parties gaining between six and seven percent – rather insignificant for a body of 450 seats. A substantial psychological blow was inflicted, however, when Medvedev signed a law to extend the presidential term from four years to six just months after being sworn in.

It was not until a wave of protests began in December 2011 that the Russian government did much to loosen up electoral policy. This lack of notable change is perhaps why Surkov's appeal for United Russia to compromise with other parties went largely unnoticed – it was likely dismissed as posturing. However, Surkov proved to be the first victim of the winter protests, and was promptly removed from his post as First Deputy Kremlin Chief of Staff and reassigned to the unenviable role of Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Modernization. This was preceded by the swift rejection of his ideas for electoral reform not by Medvedev's technocratic elite, but by Putin's siloviki elite (Whitmore 2012b). As will be discussed below, these two sides of what became

known as the “ruling tandem” had been under considerable stress following Putin's announcement of his return to the presidency, and the administration's decision to throw Surkov under the proverbial bus seems to have done little more than further undermine United Russia and the imposed consensus that was keeping the power vertical together. It was under these conditions that the Kremlin instituted some additional policy changes, albeit cosmetic ones, including the reinstatement of direct gubernatorial elections. This move was quickly downplayed by the opposition, which pointed out that the process was crippled by a provision allowing the president to weed out undesirable candidates (White 2012). Vague comments by Medvedev on the need to increase government transparency were also taken with a grain of salt (Pryde 2012), and markedly lower signature barriers (500 instead of 120,000) to register political parties has quickly resulted in the kind of niche fracturing that the Kremlin knew would result. Surkov's reassignment was probably the only substantial policy change resulting from these protests.

Because of the importance of the imposed consensus in maintaining Putin's power vertical, continued revenue from raw materials exports is an essential bargaining chip to maintain the appeal for elites to bandwagon with the Kremlin (Gel’man 2005). According to IMF forecasts, economic growth through 2015 is estimated to hover around 4% – only about half of what it was during the Putin years ("IMF Upgrades”). Combined with a possible drop in oil prices and the threat of economic crisis in Europe, former Finance Minister Aleksei Kudrin warned that Russia is at risk for “a change in all state authorities” (“Russian Economy's Dependence”). This issue became especially acute after Kudrin up and resigned in September 2011, depriving Russia of its most-trusted financial reformer

and setting analysts on edge (Anishchuk 2011). If Putin's elites begin to doubt his ability to continue providing their rents, some may begin to feel that the imposed consensus is no longer much imposed. A comment from Gleb Pavlovsky illustrates the elite's growing desperation:

> I think that it was a few cohorts – who owed their position and wealth to Putin – who pushed him into [seeking a third term]. They asked themselves a simple question: if it were not Putin, would their capital be guaranteed or not? That is why I, like a maniac, since I was close to the presidential staff then, said all the time that Medvedev must find a way to give guarantees to the "collective Putin." But Medvedev thought that the president was above these trivialities. (Whitmore 2012a)

Perhaps Medvedev's supporters had a similar opinion as the president, but regardless, it was a rare sight to see them express such public disappointment in Putin's announcement. Pavlovsky, who was fired from his post as Kremlin advisor after publicly supporting a second term for Medvedev, joined presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich, among others, in wearing his ire on his sleeve (Barry 2011). This was one of the most obvious signs that the tandem had come to represent two sides within the political elite – Medvedev's technocrats and Putin's *siloviki*. And it was one of the most apparent signs that this elite might be splintering into one group that remains committed to the imposed consensus and another that is more interested in Medvedev's purported vision of modernization.

It may be because of this growing split that Putin chose Medvedev to head United Russia in April 2012. The party has often been dismissive of Medvedev, and the latter has not expressed much love in return (White 2012). Attempting to reconcile this disparity might be one of the only ways of keeping United Russia relevant, especially in

light of its drop in popularity (Whitmore 2011) (“Россияне об ОНФ и ЕР”) and rapidly growing association among Russian citizens as a “marionette structure controlled by the Kremlin” [“марионеточная структура, управляемая из Кремля”] (“Россияне об ОНФ и ЕР”). The reasons for this drop are twofold. First, institutional factors predict that the party's dominance cannot last forever. As noted before, United Russia lacks any ideology. As Stephen Hanson has argued, this was actually a necessary condition of securing support for the party, since a fear of political ideologies in general has proven to be a legacy of the Soviet period (Hanson 2003). At the same time, ideology is necessary for long-term regime survival (Hanson 2003). While the party’s flexible approach was beneficial in the short-term, United Russia must fill this ideological gap if it is to maintain dominance at least through the end of a fourth presidential term for Putin.

Secondly, a number of external factors also play a role in United Russia's current decline. Economic and social modernization pose a potential threat to the long-term survival of the party system (Gel’man 2008). As will be discussed in later chapters, Putin is manifestly uninterested in promoting any type of social modernization. In fact, doing so would be antithetical to the very ideology and identity that he has chosen to bolster his own legitimacy and that of his regime. In any case, another complicating issue for United Russia is leading oppositionist Aleksei Navalny's rise to prominence and successful campaign to nickname it “the Party of Swindlers and Thieves” [“Партия жуликов и воров”]. This brazen epithet either tapped into existing popular discontent with the party or helped exacerbate it – or both. The Kremlin's willingness to abandon Surkov also puts into question its dedication to upholding his vision of maintaining United Russia's

dominance through 2021. Finally, while appointing Medvedev might have been Putin's best move to help close the fissures between the two sections of the elite, it reinforced the negative image of both the party and Medvedev as weak: a lame-duck, stand-in president is assigned to a party that has suffered a dramatic drop in popularity. If Putin wants to establish a full-fledged dominant party system in Russia – his safest bet for maintaining power, even just during the rest of his current term – each of these shortcomings would have to be mitigated.

There are several factors that could improve the odds for long-term viability of Putin's hybrid regime. If oil prices fail to drop and forecasters begin to predict that this is a stable trend, the president would have an easier time assuring elites that it is in their interest to continue supporting him. However, oil market volatility makes this impossible to guarantee, and current short-term reports foresee the opposite (Conerly 2013). When faced with political entities that do not submit to Putin's imposed consensus and threaten to gain popular support, the Kremlin could employ its ever-popular "administrative resources" to either marginalize or discredit its opponent. This seems to be the route that it has chosen in its quest to neutralize Navalny. However, it is still unclear what Navalny's conviction in the Kirovles case might have on his legitimacy as a political candidate. In July 2013, Russian citizens who are aware of the case were split between believing that it was politically motivated (46 percent) or that Navalny is truly guilty (32 percent). The biggest takeaway for the time being may simply be that a majority of Russian citizens (68 percent) do not know what the case is about ("Первое впечатление россиян").

Another approach would be to address United Russia's lack of ideology. Doing so would be especially prudent given that the party's political monopoly is a vital component of the power vertical that Putin's hybrid regime – and thus, his own power – relies on. In order to be effective, such an ideology would have to appeal to enough Russian voters as to reestablish popular confidence in the party. Putin's task, then, is to identify a set of values and principles that one could reasonably expect Russians to unite under. This necessity to unite popular support itself demonstrates why the Russian government is unlikely to turn to Soviet authoritarianism for inspiration on how to assert its hegemony: no matter how unpopular United Russia has become, the Communist Party is faring much worse ("Электоральные рейтинги"). Absent much positive historical association with liberal democracy or the values associated therein, Russians are perhaps more likely to find common ground within a deeper set of national traditions. As the remainder of this paper will go on to explore in detail, this is certainly the conclusion that Putin has come to, and his policies to establish a Russian national identity are designed to engineer the country's moral fabric – not necessarily to reflect any genuine beliefs the president might have, but to guarantee his political future.

Chapter 3: Cultural Politics in Contemporary Russia

As regime type in Russia has shifted over the past few decades, it follows that the country would also experience a shift in cultural policy. To establish if that shift has resulted in a new set of such policies, rather than their extinction, one must examine the behavior of Russian governmental agencies and individuals within those agencies within the cultural sphere and determine whether or not they constitute a distinct course of action meant to achieve the policy goals discussed in the previous chapter. As a rule, most analysts do not believe that the Russian government today has a defined cultural policy. Such assessments presume that a lack of the kind of systematic censorship and personalistic intervention into cultural affairs that existed in the Soviet Union means that the current government has not adapted these policies to reflect their own prerogatives. This chapter intends to argue the contrary. It will demonstrate how the behaviors discussed below are either the direct outcomes of intentional policies by Russia's federal and local cultural ministries or auxiliary actions by government officials in other agencies that still form a part of a comprehensive cultural policy.[14]

There is a wide gap between Russian and Western scholarship on the definition and priorities of contemporary governmental cultural policy. In order to compensate for the broad and evolving scope of activities that such policies cover in their own countries, Western publications typically provide a general definition along the lines of "government interventions to protect or to encourage activities in the cultural field"

[14] For an explanation of how cultural policy can be seen in this holistic manner, see Mulcahy 2006, 322

("Supporting the arts in spinning times").[15] The primary concerns among these academics include ways to deal with ever-increasing budget cuts in the arts and humanities and how to boost waning popular interest in these areas.[16] There is also much discussion of how to modernize cultural policy, emphasizing the need to "guide rather than direct," "empower communities to solve their own problems rather than simply deliver services," "meet the needs of the customer, not the bureaucracy," "decentralize authority," and "solve problems by influencing market forces rather than creating public programmes," among others (Čopič 2011, 13). Essentially, the task they have set for themselves is to lobby for measures that will enable artists, writers, curators, composers, and other producers and promoters of cultural products to flourish within a modern capitalist economy.

Contemporary Russian scholarship on cultural policy shares these concerns,[17] but is dominated by others. Much of the discussion among academics and cultural ministry bureaucrats alike centers on the need to use cultural policy to address issues of Russia's national identity and socio-economic problems. Vladimir Luzan argues quite passionately that Russia faces "only one main fundamental question – the question of individual and collective self-identification," which can only be resolved "in case the Culture becomes the most important national priority of the country development" (Luzan 2009). Olga Astafieva frames culture as primarily a tool to build consensus among Russian citizens as to what their identity and interests truly are. (Астафьева 2011, 2) She further posits that these goals are unattainable "from without" ["извне"] (3). In discussing a poll on the

[15] For more detail on the need for such a broad definition, see Mulcahy 2006.
[16] See Cultural Policy Update, 1.1 (2011)
[17] See Востряков 2004.

question of “why the population is unsatisfied with the government's current cultural policy” [“почему проводимая властями культурная политика вызывает недовольство у населения”], Astafieva remarks:

> ...the respondents did not reflect the interdependence of the choice of priorities within the management of the cultural sphere and governmental and societal attitudes towards national culture. Only 13.6% of respondents between the ages of 18-24, we must suppose, understand that attitudes towards national culture are an indication of the results of cultural policy. Overall, thus responded 22% of all of those surveyed.
>
> ...респонденты не отразили взаимозависимость между выбором приоритетов в управлении культурной сферой и отношением к национальной культуре со стороны государства и общества. Только 13,6% респондентов в возрасте 18–24 года, надо полагать, понимают, что отношение к национальной культуре – это показатель результативности культурной политики. В целом, таковых всего 22% от общего числа опрошенных. (2)

Here, the author indicates that only one in five Russian citizens is aware what an important factor State cultural policy plays in how they view their own culture – and, by proxy, how they form their own national identity. Consequently, there is a widespread fear among Russian cultural policy scholars that the State will gradually abandon arts funding and force the cultural sphere to transition to a privatized, market-driven system. Doing so, they argue, would threaten to morph Russia's cultural institutions into elite entities inaccessible to those with limited financial resources (Востряков 2004) and

> create an imbalance between spiritual values and instrumental ones, which, in the end, discredits the humanitarian, essentially, idea of creating a ‘cultured person,’ and, particularly importantly for the situation of modernization reform in Russia, a “cultured society.”
>
> создает дисбаланс между ценностями духовными и инструментальными, что,

> в конечном счете, дискредитирует гуманистическую, по сути, идею формирования «человека культуры» и, что особенно важно в ситуации модернизационных преобразований в России, – «общества культуры». (Астафьева 11)

It is worth noting that these wider cultural concerns, while uncommon in Western scholarship, are not unique to Russia. Analysts in South Korea and India, for example, also discuss the broader social uses for cultural policy. However, these debates lack the same emphasis on a united national identity that permeates the Russian texts, instead emphasizing a need for increased multiculturalism (Watson 2012) (Vats 2009).

The question remains as to whether federal or local Russian cultural ministries have indeed set about to address these concerns, and, if so, how. The Yekaterinburg city administration provides an example of how local authorities in a major Russian region outside of the country's two main metropolises have interpreted the purpose of cultural policy. Tatyana Yaroshevskaya, head of Yekaterinburg's municipal cultural department, argues that the Russian State should embrace its role as the primary driver of Russia's cultural policy, especially considering the "conditions of social instability" ["в условиях социальной нестабильности"] (Ярошевская 2009) she says pervade the country. However, she assigns a special role to regional ministries of culture to employ "a great degree of specificity and diversity of forms of resolving the population's life and cultural issues" ["большей конкретностью и многообразием форм решения жизненных и культурных проблем населения"] (Ярошевская 2009). Most of the specifics she cites go far beyond the realm of the arts policy, including measures to fight unemployment,

provide social protection to the population, and to modernize city infrastructure. Two others are worth enumerating in full:

- Policy in the realm of the preservation of the family, motherhood, and childhood
- The development of leisure infrastructure; the organization of recreation and free time, arranging holidays and red-letter days
- политика в области охраны семьи, материнства и детств
- развитие инфраструктуры досуга; организация отдыха и свободного времени, проведение праздников, памятных дат (Ярошевская 2009)

These two points in particular demonstrate the current dynamic between regional and federal cultural agencies, and are worth examining in some detail.

The first measure is a good example of how the federally-legislated responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture can manifest in broad, sometimes unexpected ways. It is a result of Russia's current battle against demographic decline, which will be discussed at length in a later chapter of this paper. The salient point for now is that the word “family” in this context is strictly defined as the traditional two-parent, heterosexual collective, ideally with two children, where childcare is the mother’s primary role. Thus, this document testifies to the engagement of Yekaterinburg's municipal cultural department in the execution of the Russian federal government's National Program of Demographic Development, which delineates what the ideal family structure looks like to the Russian State. Essentially, it is a project that provides Russian citizens with a model for part of their national identity, and a central one, at that – Vladimir Putin's speech

announcing the demographic policy singles out the family as "the main thing" ["главном"] ("Национальная программа").

The second measure is striking for its similarity to late Soviet-era cultural policy that sought to structure and control leisure time. Fearing that young people would become corrupted, cynical, or otherwise degenerate if left to their own devices, the Komsomol would attempt to force them to engage in "goal-oriented, rational activity" to result in creative, rather than consumptive, entertainment (Pilkington 1994, 132). The Soviet government saw culture as a crucial element of this plan, since "since culture acted as the means of socialization of youth" (Pilkington 1994, 103). Needless to say, this attempt to monopolize free time provoked a great deal of ire among Soviet youth and was ultimately a failure. To be sure, the form in which the Yekaterinburg cultural department is implementing this policy is certainly not as invasive as it was during Soviet times. The intent, however, is equally paternalistic in its encouragement for Russian citizens to adopt a lifestyle favored by the government. As will be discussed in chapter five, this patriarchal behavior is itself an aspect of the national identity that Putin has worked to shape over the course of his presidency. It appears, then, that the aforementioned Russian academics need not worry: both federal and regional cultural agencies share their concerns.

This brief case study leads us into a discussion of the two major components of Russian cultural policy as it exists today. As noted earlier, the focus of this paper is on cultural policy as it is shaped by two factors: official cultural ministry policies and auxiliary behaviors outside of those agencies. Since both play a variety of roles

throughout the Russian cultural spheres, the most logical way to identify them is to examine each of these spheres individually. This section will address three of the major players in Russian culture today: film, music and art. However, as the main body responsible for implementing the cultural sphere on behalf of the Russian State, the behavior of the Ministry of Culture itself is best to examine first.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE

Until the past few years, the post of Russia's federal Culture Minister has not provoked much debate. Few of the ministers of the past twenty years are remembered for much besides their general likeability or particular gaffes [18] ("У российской культуры появится политика?"). There are some notable distinctions, however, between the last three individuals to head the ministry. Besides dealing with massive budget cuts, Aleksandr Sokolov (2004-2008) was largely defined by his conservative attitude towards art. He decried a Sots-Art exhibit at the Tretyakov Gallery as "a disgrace for Russia" ["позором для России") (Стравинская 2007), particularly a photograph of two policemen kissing that was sent to an exhibit in Paris ("У российской культуры появится политика?"). His reaction was shared by the Russian Orthodox community, which Kommersant characterized as "coming forward in a united front with the minister of culture" ["выступили единым фронтом вместе с министром культуры"] (Стравинская 2007). It was during this time that criminal charges for "extremism" were gaining popularity within the Russian judicial system, including in regards to theoretical

[18] A notable exception is Yevgeny Sidorov (1992-1997), who is largely responsible for legitimizing underground art in post-Soviet Russia ("У российской культуры появится политика?").

offenses to religious beliefs. Such was the case with the 2006 "Forbidden Art" ["Запрещенное искусство"] exhibit in Moscow, the curators of which were convicted of "incitement of religious and ethnic hatred" and fined for a work depicting Mickey Mouse as Jesus Christ (Fitzgerald 2010).[19] Sokolov now holds a seat on the Culture Council of the Russian Orthodox Church.

By contrast, Aleksandr Avdeyev (2008-2012) presented a relatively progressive, relatable image to the artistic community than his predecessor. He lobbied for increased federal funding, somewhat successfully, and the continuation of stipends for students in the arts ("Три года Александра Авдеева"), and publicly lambasted Gazprom's Okhta-Center skyscraper proposal ("Министр культуры России выступил против 'Охта-центра'"). When the radical art group Voina won the Ministry's Innovation contemporary art prize in 2011 for their drawing of a penis on a St. Petersburg bridge, Avdeyev commented that "the Ministry of Culture is not a censorship organ that would ban a professional jury from expressing their point of view" ["Министерство культуры не является цензурным органом, запрещающим профессиональному жюри высказывать свою точку зрения"] ("Минкульт по поводу премии 'Войне'"), and also criticized the guilty verdict in the "Forbidden Art" case ("Три года Александра Авдеева"). Venerated director Andrei Smirnov waxed nostalgic about Avdeyev in a 2013 interview on Ekho Moskvy:

> Avdeyev worked less, but he did a lot of good for culture in general and for cinematography in particular. You have to understand – directors went to talk to

[19] "Forbidden Art" consisted of works that had been rejected from other exhibits.

> Avdeyev not just to ask for money, but for advice about various important things, because Aleksandr Alekseyevich speaks the same language as us. This is a man who understands what culture is, who knows not to muck it up.
>
> Авдеев работал меньше, но и он сделал очень много добра для культуры вообще и для кинематографа в частности. Понимаете, к Авдееву режиссёры ходили не только деньги просить, но и советоваться о каких-то важных вещах, потому что разговаривали мы с Александром Алексеевичем на одном языке. Это человек, который понимает, что такое культура, знает, что в неё грязными лапами лезть не надо. ("2013: Культурная политика")

A superficial analysis of these two individuals might lead one to believe that Putin and Medvedev both chose culture ministers who most closely reflected their own sensibilities, reflecting their own political divergences. Such a conclusion would belie the fact that it was Putin who asked Avdeyev if he would like to take this post ("Авдеев рассказал"), a move that factors into Putin's manufacture of Medvedev's liberal image as discussed in the previous chapter.

The contrast between Sokolov and Avdeyev might not be so stark were it not for who came next. Vladimir Medinsky appointment as Minister of Culture in May 2012 was unexpected and widely controversial (Balmforth 2012). An active United Russia bureaucrat, Medinsky had gained notoriety from his highly popular book series "Myths about Russia" ["Мифы о России"]. The books ostensibly aim to dispel stereotypes about Russian history and provide an objective analysis, but effectively whitewashes the darker elements of Soviet and imperial times. Vladislav Surkov aptly characterizes the book as "very disputable and contentious, but absolutely useful for Russia" ["очень спорная и конфликтная, но России она абсолютно на пользу"] (Кашин 2009). Gleb Pavlovsky went a few steps further: "If you can believe that this intestinal waste is mainstream (and

judging by the numbers, it certainly is), then it makes you want to shoot yourself, flee into the woods." ["Если поверить, что эти каловые массы и есть мейнстрим {а по цифрам так оно и получается}, то хочется застрелиться, уйти в лес"] (Кашин 2009) It was this series, however, that primed Medinsky for his seat on Russia's short-lived Presidential Council to Fight Attempts to Falsify History, which came under global criticism for the same tactics from his books. Ivan Demidov, Medinsky's deputy minister on art, national art, and modernization, was also a member of this council.

Medinsky has interpreted his post as Minister of Culture as widely as existing legislation allows. The Ministry's primary set of tasks and regulations (its "положение") is dominated by an overriding emphasis on making policies to suit the national interest, which is suitably vague enough to allow the acting president and minister to define it. Following logically from his books, Medinsky appears to have interpreted "national interest" as imperialist nostalgia. Two of his early moves were to seek to transfer Lenin's waxy corpse to an actual grave and to rename a number of Russian streets to reflect the tsarist period, mirroring renewed popular sentiment to look back to pre-Soviet history for inspiration for a new national identity. He is one of several prominent figures who have called for Pussy Riot to perform their "Punk Prayer" in a mosque or synagogue, the idea being that these communities would unleash a particularly violent species of wrath upon them in response. Many of his responses to current disputed issues in the Russian cultural scene have been ambiguous, if he chooses to answer them at all. In July 2013, he claimed to know so little about a notorious law to protect religious beliefs that he could not comment on how the ministry would react if, for instance, someone chose to file a

complaint about Mikhail Bulgakov's "Master and Margarita." Asked why Bolshoi Theater director Anatoly Iksanov had a sudden change of heart and decided to quit, he derisively responded that Iksanov had simply become tired of dealing with the theater's superstar performers, since "it's always difficult to deal with stars" ["со звездами всегда тяжело"]. In an unusually blunt display of bureaucratic prerogative, he that Russia's new anti-piracy legislation was focused on the film industry, to the exclusion of all other media, in part because the government spends 6 billion rubles annually to support it: "It is definitely a state interest to preserve cinema" ["Это абсолютно государственный интерес — защитить кино"] (Копелевич 2013). According to Smirnov, though, Russian filmmakers are less than thrilled at Medinsky's work thus far:

> Now it's a disaster. Not even a year has passed. The new minister and his team came in May. I repeat. I don't know about other areas of culture. But in the film community he has incited universal hatred.
>
> Сейчас беда. Не прошло и года. С мая месяца пришёл новый министр со своей командой. Я повторяю. Я не знаю, как в других отделах культуры. В кино он возбудил всеобщую ненависть. ("2013: Культурная политика")

The reason for this hatred, Smirnov goes on to explain, is Medinsky's introduction of an ideological component to the process of choosing which films the government will promote; specifically, "which films are patriotic, and which are not" ["какое кино патриотичное, какое – нет"] ("2013: Культурная политика").

There has been a distinct ideological trajectory within the Ministry of Culture over the past decade, one that has often been to the detriment of Russia's artistic community. While Avdeyev provided cultural figures with a brief oasis, it has proven to

be as easy to dismantle as Medvedev's own progressive reforms.[20] Both practically and symbolically, Medinsky's appointment signifies a reassertion of Putin's intent to employ the Ministry of Culture as a political tool. As Smirnov's remarks indicate, this is no clearer in any cultural field in Russia today than film.

FILM

Vladimir Putin caused much stir when he made a public statement on his views of the importance of film to the Russian State in choosing to head a government film advisory panel in December 2008 (Coalson 2008). It was long before that, however, that the government under Putin's leadership had chosen the cinema as a special arena to implement his policy to construct a viable national identity for Russians. Harking back to Soviet times, a five-year plan was instituted for film, aiming, as Jasmine Van Gorp quotes, "to offer minimal conditions for the creation of artistic and socially significant films and to strengthen the social orientation of Russian film art" (Van Gorp 2011, 252). Van Gorp presents a compelling analysis of how this plan embodies Putin's desire to fashion the New Russian Man, arguing that, starting at Putin's arrival at the presidential palace, "stimulating the construction of a national identity became one of the primary policy goals" (243). She importantly notes that this was not a task that Putin set out to do alone: it reflected wider aspirations within the film community itself to address the issue

[20] Towards the end of his presidential term, one of Medvedev's chief successes became his abolishment of Daylight Savings Time; even this was reversed after Putin spoke out against it. More substantively, though, is that President Medvedev presided over the decriminalization of libel, which was reversed under Putin's third term.

of national identity. This conclusion chimes with the aforementioned Russian cultural policy scholars who also share these concerns.

The use of Russian cinema to foster this policy has produced a threat to any film that does not adhere to government guidelines for desirable content. A number of panels[21] within the Ministry of Culture assess films for their merit to receive federal funding, the most influential of which – on fiction films – is head by Deputy Culture Minister Ivan Demidov. As noted above, Demidov held a seat on the now-defunct "anti-falsification of history" council. Choosing him to head a panel, otherwise populated by a benign mix of famous and obscure directors and cinematographers, dramatically increases the likelihood for national politics to tinge the panel's decisions. This is especially the case given the requirement stipulated within the Minister of Culture's legislated duties:

> "The Minister is personally responsible for carrying out his duties as entrusted to him within the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and for the implementation of state policy in the established sphere of activity."
>
> "Министр несет персональную ответственность за выполнение возложенных на Министерство культуры Российской Федерации полномочий и реализацию государственной политики в установленной сфере деятельности." ("Положение")

While this decree seems standard enough, the latter part is sufficiently broad as to require the Ministry of Culture to undertake any governmental policy task assigned to it. Thus, when Vladimir Putin introduced a new policy to fight demographic decline in 2006, the Ministry of Culture was one of the federal agencies dedicated to combat this problem.

[21] They are: Экспертного совета по игровому кино, Экспертного совета по неигровому кино, Экспертного совета по отбору организаций кинематографии - получателей субсидий на проведение конференций, семинаров, выставок, кинопремий, мастер-классов, Экспертного совета по отбору организаций кинематографии - получателей субсидий на проведение кинофестивалей.

Since this policy calls for the promotion of the image of a traditional Russian family, the Ministry finds itself in a position where it must also promote this image. Choosing to fund films that depict the State-sponsored image of the family is one way to fulfill this duty. While it is impossible to know exactly what is said during these panel meetings, the prospect of extra funding for the depiction of a heterosexual couple having a child is likely an incentive for filmmakers, as in, for example, the film "Stilyagi." Conversely, a film depicting homosexuality in any light would probably be declined funding; this would have been the case even before the recently-passed federal law banning "homosexual propaganda." The implementation of this policy partially accounts for the abundance of films over the past decade that glorify Russia's imperial past the Soviet victory in World War II, and an Orthodox religious reawakening, all elements that support a national identity that, in turn, promotes Putin's policy prerogatives. The omnipresent Nikita Mikhalkov is himself testimony to this phenomenon. The Ministry of Culture's "100 Film" project, intended as essential viewing for Russian schoolchildren, is completely bereft of post-Soviet films – with the conspicuous exception of Mikhalkov's Burnt by the Sun ("Проект списка «100 фильмов»"). Adding to the consensus among the country's filmmaking community on the damaging effect of these policies, renowned scriptwriter Yury Arabov spoke out about the desperate state of Russian cinema during his acceptance speech at the Nika awards ceremony in April 2013:

> But every time we[22] make films, they look, in general, how can I say this to you – they are offensive exceptions to the rule. They are black sheep, and offensive black sheep, at that. As one very famous vice-prime minister told me personally, everything good in Russia is outside the system. I don't know if you and I will live until the day when everything good in Russia is within the system, and is systemic in character. We have problems. We almost cannot work. This process is happening from above and from below. [...] no money goes to cinema, since all of it is unprofitable. All of the films that get awards today are unprofitable, since they are a part of our economy, and our economy is unprofitable, since it exists on the basis of oil, on pilfering, and so on.
>
> Но каждый раз, вот, фильмы, которые мы делаем, вообщем выглядят, ну как вам сказать – таким противмвним исключением из правил. Это такие белые вороны, причем неприятные белые вороны. Как сказал мне лично один очень известный министр вице-премьер, все хорошое в России несистемна. Вот я не знаю, доживем лы мы с вами когда все хорошое в России будет системна, и носит системный характер. У нас проблемы. Мы почти не можем работать. Идет этот процесс сверху и снизу. [...] деньги в кино не поступают, поскольку это все убыточно. Все фильмы которые награждаются сегодня – убыточны, так как они являются частью наши экономики, а экономика – она убыточно, поскольку существует, ну, на нефти, на распилах, и так далее. ("речь Юрия Арабова")

This speech was censored from Russian State-controlled television, and most online clips of it have disappeared, ostensibly due to copyright infringement. Arabov ended with a plea for private financing for filmmaking – a dramatic break from the ideologues from Putin's first term that saw continued State financing the only way to prevent the destruction of their genre.[23] Despite being interrupted by the award show's host, Arabov's speech was met with audience applause.

ART

[22] The beginning of Arabov's speech implies that he is talking about those filmmakers who attend film school and are members of the cinematographers' unions.
[23] Certain nationalistic filmmakers, such as Alexander Sokurov, continue to promote a state-funding model for film.

Among Russia's best-known anti-governmental artists of the past decade is the art collective Voina. This group sought to make up for the lack of radical leftists in the Russian contemporary art scene (Техномад 2010). While their actions bear some similarities to the direct action art projects that proliferated during the 1990s, Voina rejects the artists involved in that movement, calling their ideology "fascistic glamorousness; there is nothing leftist in their personal convictions or their works themselves" ["их идеология фашизоидно-гламурная, левого там ничего нет ни в личных убеждениях, ни в самих работах"] (Техномад 2010). Each of their performances are intended to "overthrow rancid, repressive, patriarchal ideologies" ["ниспровергаем протухшие репрессивно-патриархальных идеологии"] (Техномад 2010), essentially encompassing all governmental authorities, capitalism, and the Russian Orthodox Church. These acts therefore often involve flagrant violations of the law, such as shoplifting, arson, and overturning police vehicles. This last incident formed the pretext for the arrest of two main members of the group, Oleg Vorotnikov and Leonid Nikolayev, who were charged with hooliganism motivated by hatred towards a social group.[24] Despite the very real property damage done during this act and the fact that the case was later reclassified as "hooliganism committed by a group of people"

[24] The article in full reads: p. "b" p. 1 ar. 213 CC RF "Hooliganism, a gross violation of public order, expressing clear disrespect to society, committed by motivations of political, ideological, racial, national, or religious hatred or enmity or by motivations of hatred or enmity towards a particular social group." [п. «б» ч. 1. ст. 213 УК РФ «Хулиганство, то есть грубое нарушение общественного порядка, выражающее явное неуважение к обществу, совершенное по мотивам политической, идеологической, расовой, национальной или религиозной ненависти или вражды либо по мотивам ненависти или вражды в отношении какой-либо социальной группы»].

[“хулиганство, совершённое группой лиц”], human rights advocates say that Vorotnikov and Nikolayev qualify as prisoners of conscience:

> The basis for declaring [Vorotnikov and Nikolayev] prisoners of conscience: The practice of declaring police officers or other government agencies to be separate social groups has been noted many times before in a number of cases of politically-motivated persecution. [...] The fact that the case was baselessly reclassified testifies to the bias of the investigative agencies and to their bias in relation to Nikolayev and Vorotnikov.
>
> Основания признания политзаключёнными: Практика объявления сотрудников милиции или иных органов власти отдельной социальной группой ранее неоднократно отмечалась в ряде случаев политически мотивированного преследования. [...] Факт необоснованной переквалификации дела свидетельствует о пристрастности следственных органов и об их очевидной необъективности по отношению к Николаеву и Воротникову. (“Дело группы «Война»”)

Activists at Memorial add that a proper criminal charge for the act would have been for inflicting significant property damage, which carries a lighter maximum sentence of two years in prison, compared to seven for their actual charges. Arguing that hatred of the police increases the depravity of a crime, therefore deserving greater punishment, constitutes an attempt to criminalize criticism of Russian federal or local governmental authorities. Such an argument is incongruous with any modern conception of liberal democracy, but it is carried out in such a way as to avoid appearing blatantly authoritarian. It is this type of policy that the country’s hybrid regime thrives on.

The wave of mass anti-governmental protests that began in Russia in December 2011 brought with them a popularization of grassroots leftist activism. Modeling itself off of New York-based Occupy Wall Street, Russian activists set up camp on Moscow's

Chistiye Prudy to form their own “Occupy Abai.” The focus of the group, set up days after Vladimir Putin's May 2012 presidential inauguration, was to protest the third-time leader and what they saw as his oppressive State institutions. The camp is notable here because it was very quickly enshrined in the State Tretyakov Gallery. The “Museum of Proletarian Culture” [“Музей пролетарской культуры”] opened in the gallery on July 13, 2012, designed by contemporary artist Arseny Zhilyayev as a history of modern working-class art. A segment of the exhibit is dedicated to Occupy Abai and the accompanying People's Assembly, featuring extensive posted text of the movement's principles and political convictions. One document written by the project curator decries museum workers, “particularly those at the Tretyakov,” for sharing a specific “'aesthetic taste' approach towards works of art, which was typical of the latter-day Soviet liberal intelligentsia, wallowing in commercial fetishism” (Svetliakov 2012) Another criticizes museums in general for exhibiting the past but ignoring the future, failing to support new forms of art and questioning the elitist processes by which works are chosen for display (Чехонадских 2012). The Tretyakov dedicates significant space for the exhibit, despite taking the brunt of its criticism.

The decision to include an exploration of Occupy Abai in a State museum must be examined in consideration of the fact that the camp itself had already been shut down by police when the exhibition opened. On one hand, the “Museum of Proletarian Culture” could be seen as a defiant testimony to the museum's progressive politics. If this is the case, then it represents a grave misunderstanding on the part of the project curators as to the ideological basis of Occupy Abai. As a government institution, the Tretyakov Gallery

is part and parcel of the Russian State that the activists are working to dismantle. The gallery claims to house the exhibit as "an example of the newest mass revolutionary works" ["как пример новейшего массового революционного творчества"] (""Арсений Жиляев"), effectively providing State sanction for the camp as a revolutionary action. The most generous interpretation of this situation is that the government accepts and even embraces Occupy Abai as part of a body of artistic works, but not as an entity capable of affecting social or political change. In another scenario, the gallery was seeking to lend false State tolerance towards Occupy Abai. Indeed, the exhibit downplays the Russian State's merciless repression of the protest, relegating it to a display cabinet of failed political uprisings. Given the Tretyakov's reaction to other politically-sensitive exhibits, such as firing curator Andrei Erofeev for his involvement in the Sots Art case described above (Fitzgerald 2010), this is the more likely scenario.

Like in the Voina case, the most blatant cases of government intrusion into the art world come in the form of charges for extremism or various types of hatred. These are the same charges that are often used against non-systemic opposition politicians critical of Putin's government. While an exhaustive list of recent charges against artists, galleries, and museums could fill a book of its own, one stands out as particularly recent and unambiguous case of politically-motivated governmental censorship. In June 2013, Permsky Krai Cultural Minister Igor Gladnev fired Marat Gel'man from his post as director of the PERMM contemporary art museum ("Игорь Гладнев объявил"). Gel'man had fallen into bad terms with Gladnev following the "White Nights 2013" ["Белые ночи 2013"] festival in February 2013, which was quickly closed for exhibiting

photographs of Moscow protests and works by Vasiliy Slonov mocking the upcoming Olympic Games in Sochi (Карев 2013). Police are now investigating Slonov's paintings for signs of extremism ("На выставке Гельмана"). The closures are especially notable since PERMM is Russia's only contemporary art museum outside Moscow or St. Petersburg. Gel'man is convinced that incidents are the results of intentional governmental censorship. Upon receiving news that he had lost his job, he tweeted: "I just called Gladnev and confirmed that I have been fired. The Minister of Culture, who closes exhibits, has clearly confused his responsibilities with the FSB" ["только что позвонил Гладнев и подтвердил факт увольнения. Министр культуры закрывающий выставки видимо перепутал свою должность с ФСБ"] (Guelman 2013). Gel'man's suspicions are logical enough. Civil servants in Perm made no attempt to hide their indignation at Slonov's works, and the Russian government is banking on the success of the Olympics in Sochi – something of a pet project of Putin's – to establish the city as an international tourism destination. The case also echoes the "Forbidden Art" debacle discussed earlier.

Forays by the Russian State into the world of art are by no means limited to acts of suppression. "A Man with a Heart of Gold," an exhibition of paintings of Vladimir Putin by Alexei Sergiyenko, is an example of quite the opposite. A self-described Putin supporter, Sergiyenko says he "wanted to create human portraits of Vladimir Putin that provoke good feelings" ("Kitsch art tribute to Vladimir Putin"). The brightly-colored paintings depict the president holding white flowers, embracing a puppy while crying, and playing with children, among others. While it is unclear whether anyone

commissioned Sergiyenko to do the paintings, they do belong to the presidential administration. The works are eerily reminiscent of Socialist Realist paintings of Soviet leaders – a comparison that might seem melodramatic if it were not for the arrests associated with less flattering portraits of the president. FSB officials arrested Aleksandr Shednov in 2009 for "indecent malediction in a public place" ["нецензурную ругань в общественном месте"] trying to hang a portrait of Putin in a woman's body on an administrative building in Voronezh ("В Воронеже арестован художник"). Dmitry Karuev, an activist with the Other Russia opposition party, was sentenced to fifteen days of administrative arrest for spitting (or, as Karuev claims, sneezing) on a photograph of Putin ("В Чувашии"). The police report on Karuev's is striking for its disproportionality with his act and its repeated references to Putin's status as a legitimately elected leader:

> Karuev Dmitry Sergeevich...approached the portrait of nationally-elected President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin with the goal of violating public order...and expressing clear disrespect to society, demonstratively spit at the portrait of nationally-elected President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin.
>
> Каруев Дмитрий Сергеевич...с целью нарушения общественного порядка подошел к портрету всенародно избранного Президента Российской Федерации В.В. Путина...и выражая явное неуважение к обществу, демонстративно плюнул в портрет всенародно избранного Президента Российской Федерации В.В. Путина. (Андреев 2012)

In both of these cases, an act of political protest is identified by police as indecency, disrespect to society, or a violation of public order. Like in the case of Voina, such charges form further precedent for the Russian government to criminally prosecute individuals for questioning the legitimacy of the State.

MUSIC

The Ministry of Culture deals little with contemporary musicians. Instead, this leg of cultural policy often takes place directly between musicians and high-ranking Kremlin officials. This policy stems in part from music's role in Ukraine's Orange Revolution. Lyrics from the song "Together we are many, we can't be defeated" ["Разом нас багато, нас не подолати"] by the Ukrainian rap trio GreenJolly became a popular chant on Kiev's Independence Square during the revolution: "Machinations, No. Falsifications, No. Yushchenko, Yushchenko." The song garnered abysmal scores from Russian and Belarusian judges at the 2005 Eurovision contest, leading journalists[25] to suspect political bias (Corwin 2005). While the contest was merely a reflection of Russia's demonization of the Orange Revolution, an earlier incident indicates that the judges' symbolic political grandstanding was reflective of actual national policy. In March 2005, Kremlin ideologist Vladislav Surkov called a meeting with what Oleg Kashin joking calls "the potential singers of the revolution" ["потенциальных певцов революции"], allegedly to discuss their political loyalties (Кашин 2005). The spectrum of musicians at the meeting ranged from stalwarts of the Soviet underground rock scene such as Boris Grebenshchikov to contemporary pop icons like Zemfira. Writing for Afisha magazine, journalist Oleg Kashin reports that one participant who wishes to remain anonymous says that Surkov

> ...didn't ask about anything in particular; he said that the government wants to help musicians solve their problems, if they have any, and that he is counting on musicians to at least maintain neutrality in case of a popular uprising.[26]

[25] There is virtually no academic work done on the song in a political context.

[26] The day after Kashin's interview was published, Vladimir Shakhrin, one of the musicians at the meeting, gave an interview to Izvestia ("Владислав Сурков познакомился с монстрами рока"), widely recognized

> ...не просил ни о чем конкретном, говорил, что власть хочет помочь музыкантам решить их проблемы, если они у них есть, и рассчитывает, что в случае народных волнений музыканты по крайней мере сохранят нейтралитет. (Кашин 2005)

Renowned music critic Artemy Troitsky agrees that the meeting stemmed from the Maidan:

> «Почему?» — спрашивает Земфира из Уфы. А потому, что на примере близкой по параметрам Украины убедились в том, что популярная музыка может не только делать деньги и озвучивать бордели, но и активно влиять на политическую и социальную ситуацию.
>
> "Why?" asks Zemfira from Ufa. Because the close example of Ukraine has convinced [the presidential administration] that popular music can do more than just make money and provide a soundtrack for bordellos – it can actively influence political and social situations. (Троицкий 2005)

Kashin adds that the meeting also coincides with the formation of Nashi, a youth group financed by the Kremlin explicitly intended to counter any uprising of Russian anti-governmental youth that might occur. Both projects are cases of political engineering that seem anachronistic for the twenty-first century. At the same time, this is precisely the skill that Surkov is best known for, having originated and implemented the concept of the power vertical that has come to define the Russian government under Putin. Given the reticence of most of the participants to discuss the meeting, it is difficult to ascertain what

---

as a pro-Kremlin newspaper, in which he denied that Surkov had asked the musicians to maintain political neutrality. Rather, Shakhrin insisted that Surkov wanted to discuss online music piracy. If that is the case, it is not entirely clear why the meeting was a closed-door affair, especially if it was meant as a public relations event to promote the Kremlin's intent to combat piracy. To be sure, the government was not actually interested in doing so – no significant legislation on online piracy was passed until 2013. As mentioned above, this law does not even cover music.

kind of affect it might have had. The most that can be concluded from the incident is that the Kremlin has an expressed interest in preventing musicians from voicing political protest.

A similar episode took again in October 2010, when President Dmitri Medvedev met with a handful of rock musicians in a Moscow café for casual conversation over beer.[27] Andrei Makarevich of Mashina Vremeni, who was invited to the event, claims that the president simply because "it would be nice to see each other without rushing, but to sit and calmly talk" ["хорошо бы увидеться не на бегу, а сесть и спокойно пообщаться"] (Макаревич 2010). The outcome of this meeting, besides apparent genuine enjoyment for Medvedev and some of the musicians, was that Makarevich, a prominent voice of dissent in the Soviet rock scene, began to advertise the president as "a completely adequate, perfectly wonderful person to talk to. I had a good impression of him before, and now even more so" ["…абсолютно адекватный, совершенно замечательно общающийся человек. У меня и раньше было хорошее впечатление от него, и теперь я в нем укрепился"] (Макаревич 2010). Such an endorsement has the potential to promote an image of Medvedev that allowed Russia to build a façade of potential liberalization and modernization. Given that Putin's return to the presidency and his rollback of Medvedev's reforms has dispelled any notions that the country is going to continue down that path, the 2010 meeting loses its potential to have been an innocuous get-together and becomes a case of unwitting enlistment of the Russian rock community to help construct the Potemkin village that is (or, was) Dmitri Medvedev.

[27] Though less prominently reported, Surkov was at this meeting as well ("Шевчука не позвали").

Notably absent from Medvedev's meeting was Yuri Shevchuk. Five months earlier, the DDT lead man had put Putin on the spot during a videotaped charity dinner with a blunt question about the leader's sincerity in supporting that same liberalization and modernization that Medvedev appeared to stand for (niknikolay 2010). The exchange that followed provided a rare glimpse of Putin out of his element, clearly angry and inarticulate. Shevchuk has been a prominent voice of political opposition in Russian civil society since long before mass anti-governmental demonstrations broke out in December 2011, including in Kiev during the Orange Revolution. His music is as unforgiving as his rhetoric, with songs such as "Когда закончится нефть" ["When the oil runs out"], comical but incisive in its mockery of Russia's oil dependence. He openly ridicules other musicians for selling out and "praising the cop government on Red Square" ["приветствуют на Красной площади ментовскую власть"] (vilana1973 2010). Unlike the artists and filmmakers discussed earlier, Shevchuk has met with little backlash from either prosecutors or the police. There is evidence that his songs have been censored for State-controlled television, if they are shown at all ("Цензура от Путина и Медведева"), but the overwhelming official attitude seems to be to ignore him. Given his long history as a perestroika-era rock idol, continued popularity, and lack of a following among fellow musicians, the Russian government may simply find dealing with Shevchuk to be too much of a liability for too little gain. As this paper will go on to discuss, the story of the next musicians to take such an overt stand against Putin and the country's ruling elite – the notorious punk group Pussy Riot, itself an offshoot of Voina – would prove to end quite differently.

CONCLUSION

This variety of strategies of federal and local political engagement in the cultural sphere indicates that the government has adapted cultural politics in Russia today to the meet the level of sophistication necessary for it to maintain at least a semblance of legitimacy and for the policies to still be effective within a hybrid regime. Any State policy prerogatives can be implemented in this sphere through a wide range of legislation: most commonly, provisions regulating the official Ministry of Culture and its regional bodies and the federal criminal and administrative codes. This task is easily accomplished by staffing the cultural ministries and other branches of government with individuals that share Putin's concerns about building a national identity centered on a traditional image of the family and promoting the image of the Russian Orthodox Church. The lack of much public concern that Russia practices any type of cultural politics makes this an especially effective strategy. When opposition politicians or human rights advocates complain about Gel'man's firing or Shednov's arrest, they typically see them as incidents of repression in general – not as repression that systematically occurs within the cultural sphere.

That Russia has adopted a new form of cultural politics should not be taken lightly. It speaks to a deep insecurity within Putin's government as to its own long-term viability. Rather than opening itself up to a cultural diversity unguided by State intervention, post-Soviet Russia has sought to construct an identity based on a nationalistic, often tsarist, tradition. Marina Timchenko points out that any violent attempt in the modern world to hold onto such cultural homogeneity "is merely a symptom of the loss of organic wholeness and internal harmony" (Timchenko 1992, 137).

Putin has wisely chosen the cultural sphere as a place to establish this harmony. As other elements of his power vertical begin to fail, the more important it will become for the president's staying power for Russia to embrace this desired identity. Indeed, as discussed in the preceding chapter, it may be the only tool capable of saving the vitally important United Russia. Increased intrusion into cultural affairs is a signal that Putin is losing more and more confidence in his ability to maintain enough legitimacy and popular support to remain in power.

Chapter 4: Pussy Riot and the Russian Orthodox Church

The official reaction from the Russian Orthodox Church to Pussy Riot's "Punk Prayer" was rather nonchalant. Informed of the incident during a live television interview, Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin was distinctly dismissive, saying that there was "nothing new" about "unhappy people" ["Ничего нового," "несчастные люди"] desecrating the Orthodox faith to gain public attention (Таратута 2012). After three members of the group were arrested, a church press representative insisted that the ROC had no interest in putting the activists behind bars:

> ...official church representatives have said more than once that they do not support the idea of an actual prison term in this case, but we call for a public judgment and admission to the crime... Personally, I see no reason to keep these women detained, but the main thing is that everything is followed according to the law.
>
> ...официальные представители церкви уже не раз говорили, что не поддерживают идею реального срока заключения по этому делу, но призывают к его общественному осуждению и признанию преступлением... Лично я не вижу причин для содержания этих женщин под стражей, но главное, чтобы все проходило в рамках закона. ("РПЦ просит отпустить Pussy Riot из-под стражи")

These milquetoast assessments were soon overshadowed by the fiery indignation of the rest of the Orthodox community. One month after the incident in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, the Union of Orthodox Women issued a statement "against feminism" and called for an "appropriate legal reaction" against this "crime of extremism" ["против феминизма," "соответствующая правовая оценка," "экстремистским преступлением"] ("Заявление Союза православных женщин"). The Union of

Orthodox Brotherhood were more direct in their calls for two-year prison terms and for the members of Pussy Riot to be publicly punished on Red Square's Lobnoye Mesto ("Пусть говорят. Бесы"). One popular refrain among ROC supporters, such as film director Nikita Mikhalkov, was that an appropriate punishment would be to make the activists perform in a mosque or synagogue and then try to escape from "the righteous outrage of orthodox Muslims and nationalistic Jews" ["праведного гнева правоверных мусульман, и от национальных евреев"] ("Михалков: я бы заставил Pussy Riot").

Official church rhetoric remained relatively measured throughout the course of the investigation and trial against the band. At its most heated, Chaplin argued that a "Christian country should act decisively when one of its holy places is attacked" (Bennetts 2012), and Patriarch Kirill warned that "there will be no future for us if we begin to desecrate that which is most sacrosanct" ["У нас нет будущего, если мы начинаем глумиться перед великими святынями"] ("Святейший Патриарх Кирилл"). They confined the content of their public judgments to the moral and spiritual realm, leaving legal technicalities to the secular world. By the time the trial was over, however, critics of the church were openly accusing the ROC of collaborating with the government and abandoning Christian values. Still, Kirill insisted: "The church has no levers of power to impact the way that justice is carried out and does not wish to have any" ["Церковь не имеет властных рычагов воздействия на осуществление правосудия и не стремится их иметь"] ("Заявление Высшего Церковного Совета").

While this appearance of political neutrality continues to dominate church rhetoric to this day, an analysis of the history and politics of the relationship between the ROC

and the Russian government presents quite a different picture. Taking a broad look at the formation of Orthodox influence on the Russian political and social landscape, this chapter will explore how the Russian Church and State have reconciled the differences from their Soviet past and returned to their resurrected altar – only to have to defend themselves from five young women in brightly colored frocks. It will demonstrate why the ROC and Russian government took the Pussy Riot incident as such an existential threat, one that could best be disposed of with the same degree of "cooperation" (Young 2013) that has come to define their unholy union.

The Russian Orthodox Church was set to play a key role in contemporary Russian politics even before the Soviet Union collapsed. In 1987, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev sought to enlist the church as a fellow crusader in his mission to modernize the country, chiefly by setting a high moral standard that he hoped would help stymie the State's staggering level of corruption (Garrard 2008, 2). While these hopes did not pan out (3), the Soviet government continued to recognize the potential value of the ROC as a strategic asset. This asset was most notably deployed during the August 1991 Soviet Coup. Fearing a massacre if troops in support of the coup fired on the throngs of anti-Communist demonstrators surrounding the Russian White House, newly-elected Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin appealed to the newly-elected ROC patriarch, Aleksei II, to call for calm:

> At this moment of tragedy for our Fatherland I turn to you, calling on your authority among all religious confessions and believers. The influence of the Church in our society is too great for the Church to stand aside during these events. This duty is directly related to the Church's mission, to which you have

> dedicated your life: serving people, caring for their hearts and souls. The Church, which has suffered through the times of totalitarianism, may once again experience disorder and lawlessness. (17-18)

Even after seven decades of State-imposed atheism, Yeltsin's statement testifies to a belief that an Orthodox leader could still exert significant influence over the Soviet population. In the end, Yeltsin's calls did not fall on deaf ears. Over the next several days, Patriarch Aleksei made a number of statements calling for Gorbachev to be released from house arrest and for the crowds to avoid bloodshed – on threat of excommunication (18-22). Whether or not these pleas had any effect would depend, at least in part, on how much stock the protesters put in their historical national faith.

Despite the Soviet government's official doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, Orthodox religious sentiment was far from eradicated at the end of the Soviet era. While there are a variety of problems associated with measuring religiosity in the country up to the present day (Филатов 2005), polls conducted by Russia's two most prominent sociological institutes estimate that between 31 and 47 percent of Russians self-identified as Orthodox believers in 1991 ("Религиозная вера в России"). The true figure is likely higher, considering that many Soviet citizens would have been wary of answering an opinion poll that placed them in opposition to State policy. At the same time, attitudes towards Orthodoxy at the end of the Soviet era were highly favorable: a full three-fourths expressed a "great deal of confidence" in the ROC (Greenley 1994, 257); the same number advocated a ban on anti-religious books, and less than half (43 percent) thought that the church should "stay out of politics" (258). These numbers testify to the failure of

the anti-religious policies that the Soviet government had hoped would create the world's first truly atheist state (257).

There are a number of reasons for the resurgence of the Orthodox faith in Russian public life, and many are distinctly political. While a significant number of Soviet citizens had remained religious, many others – not to mention the State itself – had relied on Communism as a social, economic, and moral guidepost. The fall of the Soviet Union discredited this creed on a theatrical scale, leaving an ideological vacuum that Orthodoxy could easily fill. It offered all Russians a unifying spiritual identity featuring a long history of nationalistic exceptionalism. The concept of Moscow as the Third Rome provided a basis for the Russian people to feel proud of their country at a time when it was literally falling apart at the seams. The Orthodox faith served as a unifying force as far back as Mongol rule (Bova 2003, 14). During World War II, it was the churches that people turned to when Josef Stalin recognized the need to let Soviet citizens put their faith in something higher than the socialist cause. Suddenly feeling redundant, many former Soviet dissidents began donning crosses when the object of their lifelong enmity dissolved overnight in 1991 (Zubok 2009, 358).

While it is difficult to determine precisely what role this renewed spirituality played in preventing the White House standoff from devolving into violence, the religiosity in the square was palpable: surrounded by a crowd clutching thousands of bibles and angry grandmothers dominating the protesters' offensive against the Communists' tanks, the fear and righteousness inspired by Aleksei likely had a role in ensuring a peaceful outcome to the coup attempt (Garrard 2008, 28). As this paper will

go on to discuss, this was only the beginning of the Orthodox patriarchy's foray into political crowd management.

The church did not fill this ideological void in Russian public life because of sheer popular devotion. Quite the contrary, Patriarch Aleksei worked hard to revive the ROC in the early 1990s by garnering support from politicians, businessmen, and the military in particular. The latter was an easy target: the failed Afghan war had left the Soviet military gutted and despondent. The Union of Committees of Soldiers' Mothers [Союз Комитетов Солдатских Матерей России] was glad to have the church as an advocate for their children, who routinely complained of abuse and poor conditions in the Soviet armed forces. The union felt that reinstituting chaplains into the military would help ameliorate these problems (Garrard 239). The patriarch also struck deals with the Interior Ministry, the Federal Border Guards Service, the Emergency Ministry, and the military in 1994 to promote "integration...in scientific, cultural, religious, and ethical fields" (Garrard 217).

The effect of these efforts was twofold: they raised the profile of the ROC throughout Russian society and raised a great deal of money for ROC causes. This cooperation has landed the patriarch with some unorthodox bedfellows. To acknowledge Lukoil's enormous financial contribution to the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Patriarch Aleksei appeared in a television advertisement celebrating the oil company's tenth anniversary in December 2001 ("Патриарх Алексий II снялся"). The relationship between these two entities – perhaps two of the most representative of contemporary Russia in general – has continued in the years since. This excerpt from a

press release issued by the ROC on December 2006 illustrates how the church blurs the line between politics and divinity:

> The Holy Patriarch expressed hope that in the future the Lukoil oil company "would lends its efforts toward making love and compassion, in addition to the development of economic life, the factors that define human relations, so that the noble cause of serving others could prove just as bountiful."
>
> Святейший Патриарх выразил надежду, что и в дальнейшем Нефтяная компания «ЛУКОЙЛ» «будет прилагать усилия к тому, чтобы наряду с развитием экономической жизни, любовь и сострадание определяли отношения между людьми, а благое дело служения ближним — было столь же плодотворным». ("Святейший Патриарх Алексий поздравил")

While it is difficult to estimate the direct effect of the ROC's individual promotion efforts on church membership, the latter has risen dramatically since the fall of Soviet power. Over the past two decades, the proportion of Russian citizens who self-identify as Orthodox has shot up to 70 percent ("Религиозная вера в России"). At the very least, the church's outreach efforts have not dissuaded potential converts. This statistic reflects the appeal of the Orthodox religion as a key element of contemporary Russian national identity, one that is even ensconced in federal law: in 1997, President Yeltsin signed a law recognizing the religion as "coterminous with the State from its very beginnings and as an essential ally in the formation of an independent Russia" (Malinkin 2011).

Vladimir Putin's relationship with the ROC highlights how useful religion has been as a tool to rally political support. On a policy level, he has advocated renegotiating the understanding of "separation" between Church and State, switching to something more akin to "cooperation" (Young 2013). His trips to historic monasteries on the islands

of Valaam and Kizhi attracted widespread media attention, and it was due to his personal intervention that federal money was allocated to help repair buildings on the islands that had fallen into dereliction under Soviet rule. The media is also notably present during major church holidays, which routinely feature Putin and his wife alongside the patriarch. The president himself will say that his faith in God has always been a part of his identity: in conversation with United States President George W. Bush, Putin claimed to have always worn a cross, even in his days as a KGB operative (Kengor 2005, 157). This statement works on multiple levels, both as a ploy to gain the confidence of a foreign leader who also professes strong religious faith, and as a testament to his own nation of his defiance against socialist atheism and embracement of the righteous path. Of these two audiences, the domestic one figures more prominently in Putin's typical rhetoric. At the end of July 2013, for example, Putin spoke of the "natural" ["естественным"] resurgence of the Orthodox faith, and claimed that his mother had baptized him in secret from his Communist Party card-carrying father ("Путин: мать крестила меня"). In donning these trappings of the Church, Putin has fashioned himself as Russia's "naturally" legitimate national leader.

The ROC has been more than happy to reciprocate Putin's advances. When mass protests broke out in Moscow following parliamentary elections in December 2011, Patriarch Kirill called on the protesters to fall back. Despite the widely documented fraud that plagued the elections, Kirill's concern was with the unruly behavior of his proverbial flock:

> [Orthodox believers] don't go to demonstrations, their voices aren't heard there; they pray in quiet monasteries, in monastic cells, in their homes, but they worry with all of their hearts about what is happening today with our people… God can make us wiser and strengthen us to take the path that will contribute to the spiritual and moral growth of oneself and society, the development of a national consciousness, and the basic values of the lives of our many millions of people… Remember that the loudest scream and the most high-pitched word is not always the one that is right, true, or honest. Our people were thus twice tempted, and maybe even more than that, over the last hundred years or so.
>
> [Православные люди] не выходят на демонстрации, их голосов не слышно, они молятся в тиши монастырей, в кельях, домах, но переживают всем сердцем за то, что происходит сегодня с народом нашим... Бог может вразумить и укрепить народ идти по пути, который будет содействовать духовному, нравственному возрастанию личности и общества, развитию национального самосознания, базовых ценностей в жизни нашего многонационального народа... Помните, что самый громкий крик и самое пронзительное слово не всегда являются правильными, верными и честными. Так соблазнился наш народ дважды, а может быть, и более в течение последних ста с небольшим лет. (“Патриарх Кирилл о протестах”)

This appeal for calm has some parallels with Aleksei II's attempts to pacify angry crowds during the 1993 coup, but it has more in common with the general patriarchal social and political values of the ROC. When Putin awarded the Order for Services to the Fatherland to Aleksei in 2004, the latter emphasized the importance of

> …the building up of the Russian state by nonpolitical methods. We educate our believers in the spirit of respect to the authorities, love of the Motherland, and aspiration to peace and accord among people of different nationalities and religions. (Garrard 2008, 243)

This statement is especially notable for its juxtaposition of a non-political message with an overtly political one, as if “respect to the authorities” was devoid of political nuance. Similarly, Patriarch Kirill's aforementioned statements deftly define religious adherence

as avoidance of public action and a move back into the home. Such admonitions are somewhat at odds with his statements of support for Putin in the run-up to the 2012 presidential election. The patriarch implicitly urged his followers to cast their votes for Putin, citing the "peaceful, calm, purposeful and consistent development" that "a miracle of God" had ushered in after the tumultuous 1990s ("Russian Patriarch Votes For 'Stability'") (Bryanski 2012). He further lauds the "high level of church-state relations and benevolent, open atmosphere" ["уровень религиозных церковно-государственных отношений такой высокий и атмосфера такая доброжелательная и открытая"] ("Патриарх Кирилл предложил Владимиру Путину"). This atmosphere has helped the church successfully lobby for certain pieces of legislation, such as federal restrictions on abortions in 2011 (Davidashvili 2013). While the amendments were atypical for a society historically tolerant of abortion, they chime nicely with the Russian government's efforts to reverse the country's demographic decline and promote the ideal image of women as mothers – an issue that will be discussed in more detail later in this paper. The result of this happy marriage is a Russia today where the lines between Church and State are fading, in a way that enables both parties to achieve a variety of political goals that stabilize their authority and popular support. At the same time, these goals present a threat to Russia's secular constitutionality, especially the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Blitt), and hence also on the development of a healthy civil society.

Pussy Riot's performance in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior was a direct attack on this cooperation between the Russian State and the ROC. Their song "Mother of God, Drive Putin Out" ["Богородица, Путина прогони") decries the church's "praise of rotten

leaders" and describes the Orthodox clergy as men with "black cowls [and] golden epaulettes," whose "main saint" is the "head of the KGB" ["Черная ряса, золотые погоны," "Глава КГБ, их главный святой"] The last lines refer to the history of collaboration between the KGB and the ROC, an admission publicly made and apologized for by Patriarch Aleksei himself, though still denied by many church officials today (Bennetts 2012). The "rotten leaders" ostensibly include Putin, who is openly targeted in the following couplets:

> Patriarch Gundyay believes in Putin
> It'd be better to believe in God, bitch
> The Virgin's cincture doesn't replace rallies –
> Holy Mary is with us at the protests!
>
> Патриарх Гундяй верит в Путина
> Лучше бы в Бога, сука, верил
> Пояс девы не заменит митингов -
> На протестах с нами Приснодева Мария! (Pussy Riot 2012a)

Here, Pussy Riot lashes out at Patriarch Kirill (whose lay surname is Gundyaev) for publicly supporting Putin's run for president and urging protesters to substitute their actions with prayer to relics of the Virgin Mary. The group was very explicit that this song was meant to call the patriarch's politics into question. As a band statement issued in mid-March reads:

> Our performance in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior was a political gesture that touches upon the problem of the collaboration with the ROC (MP) and Putin's government. Patriarch Kirill has spoken out more than once about Putin - clearly not a holy figure - and called on his parishioners not to participate in protest rallies. But the political action carried out by the authorities and the ROC (MP) before the State Duma election, which was called "Stand for two days in front of

> the Virgin's sash," was aimed at creating a picture of apolitical Orthodox citizens. This outraged us no less than the violations in the State Duma election.
>
> Наше выступление в храме Христа Спасителя было политическим жестом, задевающим проблему сработничества РПЦ (МП) и путинской власти. Патриарх Кирилл не раз высказывался по поводу явно не святой фигуры Путина, призывал своих прихожан не участвовать в протестных митингах. А политическая акция, проведенная властями и РПЦ (МП) перед выборами в Госдуму, под названием «Постойте двое суток к поясу Богородицы» была направлена на создание картины аполитичности православных граждан. Нас это возмутило не меньше, чем нарушения на выборах в Госдуму. (Lun 2012)

One of the arrested members, Maria Alyokhina, confirmed these sentiments in her opening court statement:

> As a representative of my generation, I have other questions connected to the relationship between the church and the state that I sincerely wish to have answers to from f. Kirill... I never thought that the Russian Orthodox Church needed to call people to believe in whatever kind of president, but that its role was to call people to God.
>
> У меня как у представителя поколения имеются и другие вопросы, связанные с отношениями церкви и государства, на которые я искренне желаю получить ответы от о. Кирилла... Я никогда не думала, что русская православная церковь должна призывать к вере в какого бы то ни было президента, а роль ее в том, чтобы призывать к Богу. (Алехина 2012)

By drawing attention to these issues at a time when Russia was experiencing its largest anti-government protests since the fall of the Soviet Union, Pussy Riot hoped to use their performance to galvanize public outrage against the ROC, an institution that had enjoyed a relatively stable level of popularity compared to the government itself.

The likelihood that Pussy Riot's message would actually resonate with a significant portion of the population, however, seemed low. In a poll conducted at the end of March 2012, a full month after the performance of the Punk Prayer, almost half (46

percent) of Russian citizens had never heard of the incident. Another 20 percent had heard something but did not know any details, and only 4 percent had been closely following the case. Pussy Riot's previous performances had received scant media coverage. Even eight months after the criminal trial and sentencing of the three arrested members had become an international media sensation, 41 percent of Russians still had either not heard of the performance or did not know what the case was about in April 2013 (“Россияне о Pussy Riot и церкви”).

Despite the sizable chance that Pussy Riot's action would have remained largely under the radar of most Russian citizens, the subjects of “Mother of God, Drive Putin Out” chose to launch a campaign of criminal persecution that has landed three members of the group in prison and resulted in a ban of their videos and imagery on the basis of “extremism” They did so, notably, with wide popular support: shortly before sentencing in mid-August, less than 7 percent of Russians surveyed were sympathetic to the group. Conversely, more than half (51 percent) expressed negative opinions ranging from “nothing good” to “anger” to “enmity” (“Треть россиян верит в честный суд над Pussy Riot”). As an institution that so many Russian citizens have come to consider part of their identity, it is in the interests of the ROC – and the government that had benefited from its support – to maintain its legitimacy in the public eye. As a punk group that did not enjoy popular support and had attempted to cast doubt on this legitimacy, Pussy Riot had made itself a prime candidate for a guided excursion through the Russian judicial system.

Religious experts and human rights advocates have recently raised questions as to whether the Russian Ministry of Justice has broadly fallen under the influence of

religious organizations (Морозов 2013) (“Влияют ли религиозные предпочтения”). Much of this criticism reveals how the ministry has been able to interpret Russia's law recognizing four “official” religions – Russian Orthodoxy, Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism – to reflect their own convictions. A report released in May 2013 looked at how relations between the Justice Ministry and religious organizations have developed following Alexander Konovalov's appointment as Justice Minister in 2008 and his creation of the Expert Council on Conducting State Religious Analysis the year after. Its main conclusion is that “in the religious sphere, we see a marked 'slant' of interests towards the Russian Orthodox Church” [“в религиозной сфере мы видим значительный «перекос» интересов в сторону Русской Православной Церкви”] (Морозов 2013). It cites a number of high-level ministry employees and council members – including Ponkin – who belong to the European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism, which religious and legal experts have widely criticized for persecuting religious minorities (Besier 2012.). These individuals have varyingly published articles with negative statements about 'nontraditional' religious organizations, violated federal regulations on conducting expert analysis, and made “vulgar statements with historical inaccuracies” [“вульгарными выражениями и историческими неточностями”] about Muslims (Морозов 2013). A top Muslim scholar in Nizhny Novgorod accused Konovalov of discriminating against Muslims and “violating acting legislation by openly supporting one confession” [“нарушение действующего законодательства в открытую поддерживают одну конфессию”] (Рискин 2006), forcing the minister to “correct his behavior” [“скорректировал своё поведение”] (Морозов 2013). This

primacy on Orthodoxy is prevalent in other federal government bodies as well. A report by REN-TV in October 2012 reveals how a Russian Railways summer camp for children of its employees took it upon itself to baptize any whose parents had not already done so. Lyubov Neshina, head of the camp, justifies the policy on the basis that "we have a responsibility for [the children's] Orthodox upbringing" ["у нас есть ответственность за православное воспитание"] ("Принудительное крещение детей в лагере"). New federal laws passed since the end of the Pussy Riot trial banning "public actions that express clear disrespect towards society and committed with the goal of offending the religious feelings of believers" ["Публичные действия, выражающие явное неуважение к обществу и совершенные в целях оскорбления религиозных чувств верующих"] ("Федеральный закон") as well as "homosexual propaganda," both of which the ROC lobbied for heavily, reflects the willingness the Duma, the Federation Council, and the president to permit church influence on the legislative level. These incidents indicate that there is an unwritten understanding within the Russian bureaucracy that it is acceptable for the Orthodox faith to influence the public conduct of government officials, resulting in the discrimination of members of other religions and pressure on non-believers to embrace an Orthodox identity.

Rather than addressing the possible validity of the concerns raised by the Punk Prayer head-on, the church was quick to frame the song as an act of desecration of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. In a speech on March 24, 2012, Patriarch Kirill dismissed the political basis of the performance as "justifying this sacrilege" ["оправдывают это кощунство"] ("Святейший Патриарх Кирилл"). He goes on to assert that "there will be

no future for us if we begin to desecrate that which is most sacrosanct" ["У нас нет будущего, если мы начинаем глумиться перед великими святынями"], and urges church members once again to rely on prayer as their primary civic act:

> But, maybe, the Lord is leading us through these hardships during the holy days of Lent so that we all become cognizant of our responsibility for our land, for Holy Rus', for Orthodox faith. In an Orthodox person, this feeling of responsibility is expressed most of all through ardent prayer to God. Those people do not believe in the power of prayer. They believe in the power of propaganda, in the power of lies and power, in the power of the Internet, in the power of the media, in the power of money and weapons. We believe in the power of prayer.
>
> Но, может быть, Господь проводит нас через эти испытания в святые дни Великого поста для того, чтобы мы все осознали ответственность за землю нашу, за Русь Святую, за веру православную. У православного человека это чувство ответственности выражается, в первую очередь, в горячей молитве к Богу. Те люди не верят в силу молитвы. Они верят в силу пропаганды, в силу лжи и клеветы, в силу Интернета, в силу СМИ, в силу денег и оружия. Мы верим в силу молитвы. ("Святейший Патриарх Кирилл")

Again, the patriarch downplays the value of active civil engagement, echoing his opposition to Orthodox participation in the winter protests. Meanwhile, he evokes the Russian victory over Napoleon in 1812, which the cathedral was built to commemorate, arguing that believers must pray to defend the sanctity of this holy place. Taking an almost defensive tone, Kirill directly links Russia's fate as a sovereign entity to the ROC, citing "this land of ours, which by the mere fact of its existence is in many ways obliged to the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox faith" ["в земле нашей, которая самим фактом своего существования во многом обязана Церкви Православной и вере православной"]. The court case against Pussy Riot would largely be based on charges that its members intentionally violated the rules of the cathedral, and this speech by Kirill

demonstrates why it would benefit the ROC for the building itself to take center stage. It is perhaps the utmost symbol of the synthesis of State, military, and Orthodox authority and power in a war that distinguished Russia as the savior of the European continent. By channeling attention to Pussy Riot's disrespect of such an iconic structure, the ROC was able to largely ignore the actual lyrics that the group sung in the cathedral: it was their dancing and screaming, their argument goes, that testifies to their hatred of God and country.

The political character of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior is not limited to Napoleon's frigid downfall. Quite the contrary, the cathedral today is perhaps first and foremost a symbol of Russia's post-Soviet religious renewal. At the turn of the century, Patriarch Aleksei II reconstructed the cathedral as part of his campaign to resurrect the ROC, since Stalin had demolished the building in 1931. Among the countless churches torn down by the Communist regime, it was a natural pick for rebuilding: in addition to its status as the largest Orthodox cathedral in the world, it allowed Aleksei to promote a link between the ROC and the military. He wanted to establish this relationship as soon as possible, since he "sensed that [the church] had to link with the military and patriotism" to "establish itself as a permanent force in society" (Garrard 2008, 86). As William Brumfield notes, the building itself embodies "the purity and orthodoxy of Russian church architecture," and hence is "expressive of official ideology" (Brumfield 2004, 485). Ironically, the purity of this architecture is compromised by the participation of sculptor Zurab Tsereteli in its construction. In addition to making a number of decidedly unorthodox changes to the cathedral's decorations, his status as a patron of then-Moscow

Mayor Yuri Luzhkov adds an aura of corruption to the sanctified recreation. Recent reports that the cathedral has been transformed into a gigantic commercial hub with fifty-seven firms on its premises ("57 Firms Registered") have also threatened to taint the building's image – enough so that the cathedral's official foundation sued a human rights activist who told newspaper Novaya Gazeta that it was a "business center where commerce is unregulated by the law" ["бизнес-центр, где торговля не подчиняется законам"] (Масюк 2012) (Ротанова 2013). Despite these and other complicating factors, the ROC continues to defend the sanctity of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior and its status as a beacon of Orthodox supremacy.

As noted above, much of the verdict written by Judge Marina Syrova in the Pussy Riot case cited the defendants' supposedly blasphemous behavior in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior as a primary reason for their conviction. One key document in this matter is a piece of expert testimony from three professionals chosen by the defense, whose report asserts that the group's behavior was manifestly motivated by religious hatred. The analysis, which claims to have "used methods of psychological, linguistic, and legal-linguistic analysis" ["методы психологического, лингвистического и юридико-лингвистического анализа."] (Фейгин 2012b), focused on three questions: 1) could Pussy Riot's actions be deemed a gross violation of accepted societal norms and rules of behavior that express a clear disrespect and disparaging attitude towards society or a certain social group, 2) could their actions have been motivated by political, ideological, race-based, nationalist or religious hatred or animosity against a certain social group, and 3) were their actions planned jointly. The analysis on questions one and

two is split into two parts, one focusing on the defendants' behavior, and another on the text of their song. The former takes up a third more text than the latter, and describes in great detail the offensive nature of the women's' outfits and physical movements. Pointing out that the rules for behavior in the cathedral are posted clearly at its entrance, the authors argue that these actions are an "obvious gross violation of widely accepted norms and rules of behavior" ["грубое нарушение общепризнанных норм и правил поведения"] (Фейгин 2012b). They further assert, essentially, that Pussy Riot's attack on Patriarch Kirill constitutes an attack on all Orthodox believers "by using verbal abuse and mocking their values" ["путём вербального уничижения, высмеивания их ценностей"] (Фейгин 2012b). The majority of their conclusions rely on this presupposition. How they came to this understanding of the group's behavior is never articulated; the authors appear to consider it self-evident.

This rhetoric stands in stark contrast to the two original expert analyses conducted for the case by the Moscow City Center for Information and Analytical Technology. These reports directly cite the Punk Prayer's reference to "the role of the institution of the Russian Orthodox Church in contemporary society" ["с ролью института Русской православной церкви в современном обществе"] and "freedom and human rights," ["со свободой и правами человека'] and also include Pussy Riot's own explanation of their song on their LiveJournal page (Фейгин 2012a). These issues, as well as detailed linguistic analysis indicating the specific targets of the song – for the Virgin Mary to become a feminist; for Putin to be kicked out of the country, and so on – are characteristic of the types of detailed explanations that are missing from the third report.

Aside from its problematic internal logic and lack of detail, there is a wealth of basic issues that compromise the third report's legal validity. One of the most serious involves the identity of one of its authors. Mark Feygin, a lawyer for Pussy Riot, posted the third report on his blog for public discussion. He coupled it with a lament that this testimony had, contrary to the two original ones, concluded that the Punk Prayer was indeed motivated by religious hatred:

> When the dumbfounded investigators and prosecution lawyers received two expert reports in a row from the authoritative institute GUP "TsIAT," which quite unexpectedly established a lack of guilt on article 213, part 2, on the part of our clients, the "concilium" decided to rebel. One of the defense lawyers jammed in a motion to disagree with the results of the two previous expert reports, and the investigation hastily granted it, naming a new evaluation from "their own." I would like to note that all of the defense's motions to exclude the materials from this third report from the trial from here on out (just like, incidentally, with all other motions) was rejected. And we were only made aware of this third report after it was completed. TYPICAL LAWLESSNESS.
>
> Когда ошарашенные следователи и адвокат потерпевших получили друг за другом две экспертизы авторитетного учреждения ГУП "ЦИАТ", столь непредсказуемо зафиксировавшего отсутствие вины по ст.213 ч.2 наших подзащитных, "консилиум" решил возмутиться. Адвокат потерпевших накатала ходатайство о несогласии с результатами двух предыдущих экспертиз и следствие поспешно его, ходатайство, удовлетворило, назначив новую экспертизу "у своих". Замечу, нам стороне защиты, во всех ходатайствах об исключении из материалов дела этой третьей экспертизы в дальнейшем (как, впрочем, и в других ходатайствах) было отказано. Да и познакомили нас с этой третьей экспертизой уже после её окончания. ТИПИЧНОЕ БЕЗЗАКОНИЕ. (Фейгин 2012b)

Among the prosecution's new set of experts was Igor Vladislavovich Ponkin. As the group's legal expert, Ponkin helped write the answers to questions one and two, particularly in regards to "the normative qualities of public order and rules of behavior in a religious building" ["нормативного содержания общественного порядка и правил

поведения в культувом здании”] (Фейгин 2012b) It was his particular testimony, then, that became the major basis for Pussy Riot's prosecution. Mid-way through the trial, Feygin revealed that that Ponkin had co-written two books with prosecution lawyer Mikhail Kuznetsov: “On the Right to a Critical Evaluation of Homosexuality and Lawful Limitations on the Imposition of Homosexuality” and “The Dishonest Discussion of Religious Education in Secular Schools: Lies, Cover-Ups, and Aggressive Xenophobia” [“О праве на критическую оценку гомосексуализма и о законных ограничениях навязывания гомосексуализма,” “Бесчестная структура религиозного образования в светской школе: ложь, подмены, агрессивная ксенофобия”]. The prosecution dismissed this relationship as a possible conflict of interests, saying that “Ponkin defended his dissertation in 2004, and this evaluation was carried out in 2012. They could have parted ways in the meantime” [“Понкин защищал докторскую в 2004 году, а экспертизу проводил в 2012 году. Они могли рассориться с тех пор”] (“Эксперта по делу Pussy Riot”). Judge Syrova agreed and denied Feygin's motion to exclude Ponkin from the expert panel. Her decision to include this third report in lieu of the first two, ignoring both a clear conflict of interests and bias against the type of LGBT issues that Pussy Riot advocates for, underlines the privilege given to the prosecution and barriers set up against the defense in arguing their sides of the case.

As the popular accounts have it, the Russian government in the chaotic 1990s was largely run by oligarchs. With Putin’s ascent to the presidency and establishment of a vertical of power, this situation was intolerable: some oligarchs were exiled or imprisoned, while others were coopted into the vertical itself. Like Roman Abramovich

and oil or Mikhail Prokhorov and nickel, the Orthodox Church has a State-sanctioned monopoly on religion in Russia today. The church, however, is not as tethered to the government as the oligarchs find themselves to be. It is largely independent, free to operate within an already generous legal framework that it consistently, and successfully, lobbies to weaken. This unique position is possible because of the value of the Church to the Russian State as an ideological symbol and practical authority.

Lacking any real ideology of its own, Vladimir Putin's government has been able to partner with the Russian Orthodox Church to form a stabilizing force based on a foundation of nationalism in a country where both of these elements are keys to popular support. If only in theory, Pussy Riot's "Punk Prayer" threatened to chip away at this foundation. Their prison sentences testify to a desperate need by both Church and State for legitimacy reminiscent of the early days of Bolshevik rule. So brief a text has not inspired such a governmental backlash since Osip Mandelstam's "Kremlyovsky gorets." This fear may be somewhat justified, though: as of April 2013, more than half of Russian citizens did not support church interference in State affairs, or vice versa. At the same time, almost the same number also thought that the sentences in the Pussy Riot case were justified ("Россияне о Pussy Riot и церкви"). As Vladimir Putin continues to work to regain support lost amidst the mass protests of the past two years, it appears that, for now, he is satisfied to take a page from his predecessors to be better safe than sorry.

Chapter 5: Pussy Riot and Russian Gender Politics

To the English-speaking world, Pussy Riot could hardly have picked a more provocative name. British and American media collectively cringed as the news of the arrest of members Nadia Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina, and Ekaterina Samutsevich demanded their articulation of this taboo term. This awkwardness has been lost, however, upon the majority of Russian citizens, unlikely to know much in the way of foreign slang. It was thus a curious choice for Vladimir Putin to respond as he did when asked by a British journalist with the channel RT[28] if the case could have been handled any differently:

> *Putin*: Could you translate the name of this group into Russian?
>
> [А Вы могли бы перевести название группы на русский язык?]
>
> *Interviewer*: Pussy Riot the punk band. I don't know what you would call them in Russian, sir, but maybe you could tell me!
>
> *P*: Can you translate the word itself into Russian or not? Or is it awkward for you to do, for ethical reasons? I think it is awkward to do for ethical reasons even in English; it sounds indecent.
>
> [А вы можете перевести само слово на русский язык или нет? Или вам неудобно это сделать по этическим соображениям? Думаю, что это неудобно сделать по этическим соображениям. Даже в английском языке это звучит неприлично.]
>
> *I*: I actually thought it was referring to a cat, but I'm getting your point here. Do you think the case was handled wrongly in any way, could some lesson have been learned?
>
> *P*: You understand everything. You understand everything perfectly well. You don't need to pretend that you don't understand. It's just that these people have

[28] RT is the updated name of Russia Today, an English-language television channel founded with Russian State funding.

> imposed their name onto the public sphere and forced all of you to pronounce it out loud. It's indecent. But may God be with them.
>
> [Всё вы понимаете, вы всё прекрасно понимаете, не нужно делать вид, что вы чего-то не понимаете. Просто граждане эти навязали общественному мнению своё название и заставили всех вас произносить его вслух. Ведь это неприлично, но Бог с ними.] (Нестеров 2012)

Given the chance to shift gears, Putin continued to drive this theme home, lending an air of condescension to his comments about the actual case. As self-identified feminist activists, the women of Pussy Riot have a different take on the purpose of their name:

> A female sex organ, which is supposed to be receiving and shapeless, suddenly starts a radical rebellion against the cultural order, which tries to constantly define it and show its appropriate place. Sexists have certain ideas about how a woman should behave, and Putin, by the way, also has a couple thoughts on how Russians should live. Fighting against all that—that's Pussy Riot. (Langston 2012)

This set of remarks typifies the differences in how the two engage in gender politics. For Pussy Riot, their name is an act of female empowerment and resistance against the impositions of a patriarchal order. For Putin, it is offensive and worthy of derision. His rhetoric is by no means unique: rather, it is part of a broader masculine discourse that the three-time president has used to shape both his own personal image, and that of Russian social and political life. This chapter sets out to explore how Putin and the Russian State have attempted to shape gender politics to promote and justify specific policy prerogatives, and how Pussy Riot threatened to tarnish this model society.

Gender identity politics in post-Soviet Russia have been very problematic. From an academic point of view, there is a dearth of scholarship to help theorize or define what gender means in contemporary Russian society (Salmenniemi 2008, 16). There had been

virtually no discourse on non-heteronormative gender roles when the Soviet Union collapsed, mostly since homosexuality had been criminalized under Soviet law. While gender equality had been an ever-present tenant of official Soviet propaganda, it was never actually achieved (Attwood 1996, 99). Women are now left with the legacy and continued reality of the double burden of work and home life. Indeed, double standards reign, in general: there is less disdain, for example, with men propositioning prostitutes than with women becoming them (114). Early post-Soviet political leadership sought to entrench these inequities, arguably relegating women to the status of second-class citizens (Bruno 1996, 43).

The abysmal economic circumstances of the early 1990s put Russian women in a dangerous situation. The need to provide a second salary – or, if their husbands were unable to secure employment, a first – to feed their families forced them into the workplace (31), while, as Marta Bruno points out,

> …state and dominant ideologies seek to make women take the strain of rising unemployment and the breakdown in the social safety net by increasingly pushing them back into the home. (41)

Women were increasingly expected to take up a primarily domestic role, in part to avoid demasculinizing their husbands (Attwood 1996, 113). This focus on female confinement to the domestic sphere is in part a backlash against "Soviet style faux emancipation," which has left many Russians skeptical of embracing feminism (Johnson 2013, 544). Instead, the post-Soviet years have witnessed a revival of "archaic and more patriarchal models [of gender relations] than those of the Soviet era" (Tartakovskaia 1996, 73).

While young people coming of age in Russia today are increasingly abandoning these double-standards (Дубин 2011), male chauvinism continues to plague the workplace, political sphere, and other areas of modern life (Рожкова 2011) (“Российским женщинам не угнаться за Forbes”). The perpetuation of these sentiments is due in part to a failure of the State to create conditions to help people break down gender stereotypes that Western governments have (Salmenniemi 2008, 75).

Civic and political engagement in Russia strongly reflects these trends. While it is conditionally acceptable for women to participate in civic organizations, it is much less acceptable for them to take part in politics (85). There is also a general sense among Russians that women are potentially more radical in their approaches to problem-solving (65), and more active in advocacy on the whole. There is a distinct rift, however, between the legitimacy attributed within society to women who portray themselves as advocates of primarily motherhood and those who identify first and foremost as feminists. The former are popularly regarded as more selfless than the latter (58-59). The Union of Committees of Soldiers' Mothers discussed in the previous chapter, for example, is a well-regarded women’s organization with broad public support. Founded in 1989, it is also the largest women's organization in the country. Their focus on working to prevent their sons from falling into “draft slavery” [“призывного рабства”] (“История Союза”) and the horrors that military service in Russia entails is a particularly direct method for a woman to exercise her role as a caregiver within the sphere of civic advocacy. By contrast, organizations describing themselves as feminist were scarce in the 1990s, and are still uncommon today. One of the most prominent is not a particular organization, but

a loose network of crisis centers for victims of domestic abuse that also advocate for legislation to prosecute these crimes (Johnson 2013, 545). Even then, the number of women involved in these centers who identify themselves as feminists have dropped dramatically as they have gradually fallen under State management (560).

One of the most striking characteristics of Pussy Riot is their bold stance as third-wave feminists. Since Russian musical history is particularly devoid of feminist discourse, the band was left with almost exclusively Western influences to draw upon. Members cite feminist icons such as Simone de Beauvoir and Andrea Dworkin as elemental in developing their philosophies, and the group's musical identity builds on the US-based Riot Grrrl movement (Langston 2012). Riot Grrrl, which has roots in the larger American punk rock scene, is a multi-faceted feminist music, activism, and lifestyle movement that seeks to support and empower women in the face of, as their manifesto puts it, such as "bullshit like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, anti-semitism and heterosexism" (Hanna 1991). The Pussy Riot activists say they have "developed what they did in the 1990s, although in an absolutely different context and with an exaggerated political stance" (Langston 2012).

Two differences in that context are the Russian government's historic condemnation of punk music and the taboo surrounding female roles in informal music culture itself. While the punk scene in America drew a great deal of criticism itself, its Soviet counterpart faced the additional Cold War-era condemnation as a Western export bent on corrupting Soviet youth. Even under perestroika, punk's anarchist bent and gritty lyrics drew the ire of a government that long condemned rock music in general as a "the

moral equivalent of AIDS" (Ramet 1994, 189). Even compared to members of other Western-inspired, music-oriented informal groups ["неформалы"], punks were particular pariahs, and perhaps most neatly fit the archetype of the country's ubiquitous "hooligan." Especially in Eastern Russia, punk stood out for its "extremism of form and textual content" (201), likely provoked by the social and economic hardships that plagued urban industrial outposts in the Far East. In addition, the gendered nature of anti-rock music discourse in the Soviet Union particularly condemned women in these groups for abandoning their roles as "guardians of morality," (Pilkington 1994, 112). Whereas rock music was thought to corrupt young men, it was the lifestyle surrounding this scene that was considered more damaging to young women, essentially starting them down a path towards prostitution (190). Given this historic animosity, Pussy Riot set itself a particularly Sisyphean task in using a feminist punk platform to affect social and political change in Russia.

Incidentally, it is no surprise that the Riot Grrrl movement would have eventually taken root in Russia. It is a movement that explicitly rejects traditional modes of female behavior that adherents see as built and sustained by the expectations of men to subvert, control, and abuse women. Russia is a country with a strong patriarchal tradition, where many women live by the phrase "first they like your clothes, then they judge your mind" ["встречают по одёжке, провожают по уму"], and where domestic violence remains not criminalized, with rates so astronomically high that the need for the crisis centers discussed above constitute the largest feminist-oriented network in the country. For Russian women who reject this model of society, Riot Grrrl is a radical escape.

Pussy Riot's feminist punk image, then, is antithetical to the traditional image of a nurturing Russian mother. This is true not only in an aesthetic sense – the bright clothing; the loud, declarative music and dance – but an ideological one, as well. The band's songs directly confront what they see as patriarchal despotism in their country, where building an anarchic, horizontal network of feminist activists is the best way to overcome exclusionary and repressive male-dominated institutional politics. Their song "Putin Pissed Himself" ["Путин зассал"] condemns this phenomenon broadly, indicting the Russian ruling elite in general:

> Resentment of the culture of male hysteria
> Wild leaderism devours the brain
> The Orthodox religion of a cruel penis
> Proposing that its patients accept conformity
>
> Недовольство культурой мужской истерии
> Дикий вождизм пожирает мозги
> Православная религия жесткого пениса
> Пациентам предлагается принять конформность (Pussy Riot 2012b)

While the country's largest women's movement focuses on protecting and nurturing the men who defend the Russian homeland, Pussy Riot calls for the opposite: the dismantling of a hierarchy led and shaped by men that is so insipid, they say, that it strips its subjects of skills to critically examine their own situation. For Pussy Riot, men are the perpetrators, not the victims. The fact that Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova both have small children does not seem to have done much to counter accusations that they are selfish, godless feminists – and, hence, irresponsible mothers.

As “Putin Pissed Himself” and other Pussy Riot songs make clear, two of the key individuals sitting highest atop the patriarchy as they see it are Vladimir Putin and Patriarch Kirill I.

As discussed in the previous chapter of this paper, the Russian Orthodox Church with Patriarch Kirill at its head has a staked interest in Pussy Riot's guilty verdict and public condemnation. The punk group's stance on gender issues gives the church only more of a basis to demonize them. Tolokonnikova raises issue with some of Kirill's statements on gender politics in an April 2012 letter written in a pre-trial detention facility:

> The Patriarch is aiming for an aggressive reaction on the part of Russians toward the idea of gender equality, [...] the Patriarch is trying to convince Russians that “gender laws” are not based on “the ethical consensus of society,” but are passed by force – through “the pressure of television, public opinion, the internet, twisting of hands, intimidation.”
>
> Патриарх добивается агрессивной реакции россиян на идеи гендерного равенства, [...] Патриарх пытается убедить россиян в том, что «гендерные законы» не основываются на «нравственном консенсусе в обществе», но принимаются силой — «давлением телевидения, общественного мнения, интернета, выкручиванием рук, запугиванием». (Толоконникова 2012a)

These statements are a response to remarks made by Kirill that gender is a fully malleable social construct. Tolokonnikova's manifesto goes on to argue that he falsely attributes total agency to individuals seeking to construct their own gender identities. Rather, she says, this process is confined by political factors that must be overcome to reach a stage of gender equality. A look at the rhetoric and policies of the ROC and Orthodox community on women's issues indicates that the church is not eager to confront these

factors. Just as Russian society embraces the image of woman as mother, the Orthodox Church promotes a similar concept of femininity centered on morality and motherhood (Salmenniemi 2008, 80). Prosecution witnesses in the Pussy Riot trial argued that the word "feminism" was itself profane for Orthodox believers, especially when said in a church ("Excerpts from the Court Transcript," 50-51). The church has also played a large role in pushing for federal legislation to ban "homosexual propaganda," effectively criminalizing a range of activities from gay pride parades to public displays of same-sex affection. Conversely, Pussy Riot have been outspoken advocates for making LGBT rights a top policy issue, and have criticized even the non-systemic political opposition for failing to support the gay community (Группа Pussy Riot, 2011). This stance would be intolerable to the Orthodox community even without the Punk Prayer performance. Bringing these views into the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, then, was doubly blasphemous to Orthodox believers.

At the very top of the patriarch Pussy Riot describes is Vladimir Putin himself. Janet Johnson and Aino Saarinen have a thorough discussion of Putin's popularization of a gender ideology that bases itself in masculinist rhetoric. His notorious shirtless photo shoots arguably serve to "embolden the national psychology and to legitimate more muscular intervention into all aspects of people's lives" (Johnson 2013, 548). Nearly all of Pussy Riot's songs demonize Putin, whether claiming that he "pissed himself," decrying his sexism, or praying for divine intervention to remove him altogether.

One of the most tangible ways that such "muscular intervention" has manifested on the federal level is in regards to demographic policy. Putin has been faced with the

task of reversing his country's population crisis ever since coming to power. Russia has historically aligned itself against a wide variety of real and imagined existential enemies, but the low life expectancy and falling birth rate that characterize most of the post-Soviet period is as literal a threat as they come. In 2006, St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matvienko went so far as to call it a national security threat. This was the same year that Putin admitted in his annual presidential address that population was "the most acute problem facing our country today," marking the official beginning of a wide-ranging government effort to avert total demographic catastrophe. Measures include the introduction of a stipend for mothers who have a second child dubbed the "maternal capital" ["материйнский капитал"], a media campaign to propagandize a positive image of a multi-child family, and the designation of 2008 as the Year of the Family. Starting in 2008, the government also established July 8 as the Day of Family, Love, and Fidelity, meant to promote, in a departure from preceding rhetoric, men and fatherhood as an integral part of the family structure (Johnson 2013, 549). While Vladimir Putin is doing his best to argue that these measures are to thank for Russia's recent population growth, this spike is more likely a result of an influx of migrant workers from Central Asia (Clover 2013). This migration is precisely what the 2006 national program on demographic development sought to preclude. Considering also that the city of Moscow, home to the largest proportion of migrant workers in the country, is overtly antagonistic towards their migrant population ("Sobyanin Calls for Tougher Laws"), Putin's task appears to remain unresolved.

Scholars point to Putin's introduction of birth rate policies as “the first time that post-socialist gender politics have been so clearly outlined in Russia” (Rotkirch 2007, 350). The Maternal Capital was officially meant to help offset the economic disadvantage that a mother would otherwise face having to take time off from work to care for her child, theoretically empowering her to later restart her career. However, the amount given is only enough to encourage low-income families to have a second child, whereas middle-class families would still suffer under the additional burden (354). To be sure, it is not as if the Russian government lacked an alternative approach. A contrasting policy might, for example, identify indirect other holistic causes of low total fertility and address them comprehensively. As Eveliina Heino points out, “in this material there is no discussion at all of the requirements of educational and working life sectors” (Heino 2012, 83). As a one-time cash payout, the Maternal Capital certainly does not compensate for sheer time, energy, or other commitments necessary for these pursuits.

While the practical shortcomings of Putin's demographic policy could be rectified by tweaking legislation – increasing the size of the stipend, introduce more supportive maternity leave laws, and so on - more intrinsically problematic within a feminist critique is their philosophy. The policies are predicated on a belief that the birth rate in Russia can only improve if the State intervenes directly into the lives of its chosen subjects, in this case potential second-child mothers, who must submit to the measures experts have deemed appropriate to rectify their problem (77). That social norms do not accept women into this ruling elite, as discussed above, makes the iniquity especially acute. Furthermore, Putin's demographic policies and the rhetoric he uses to justify them posit the traditional

nuclear family as “the main thing” [“главном”] (“Национальная программа”), the very thing that Russia's socioeconomic development is meant to benefit. They further single out the family as a vital aspect of Russia's preservation of “patriotic spiritual-moral traditional family relations” [“отечественных духовно-нравственных традиций семейных отношений”] (“Национальная программа”). Citing Foucault, Heino notes that the State is not glorifying this type of family unit for its own inherent value - it is an instrument used to address a policy issue. It follows, then, that any individual choice to deviate from the traditional, heterosexual, two-child family, State-ordained sense of morality, love of country, or trust in God makes one inherently less valuable to the Russian State. This position is complimented by the ROC, which see the fall in childbirths as connected to general moral degradation (Rotkirch 2007, 355). It is easy to see how sexual minorities could be subject to the type of brutal violence ubiquitous at Russian pride events when presidential rhetoric, State policy, and church doctrine identify the perpetrators as fundamentally better citizens.

The Russian government's top-down approach to boosting the birth rate and its exclusion of non-traditional family structures is a prime example of the type of paternalism that Pussy Riot seeks to overcome. Their song “Liberate the Pavement” [“Освободи брусчатку”] sets its sights on the demographic policies directly:

> Khimki Forest defended, Chirikova gets “no access” to elections,
> Feminists are sent off on maternity leave.
> […]
> Egyptian air is good for the lungs
> Do Tahrir on Red Square
> Spend a riotous day among powerful women.

> Find a crowbar on the balcony, liberate the pavement.
>
> Химлес защичен, у Чириковой к выборам - "недопуск",
> Феминистки отправлены в декретный отпуск.
> [...]
> Египетский воздух полезен для легких
> Сделай Тахрир на Красной площади
> Проведи буйный день среди сильных женщин.
> Поищи на балконе лом, освободи брусчатку. (Pussy Riot 2012c)

These lyrics posit that the Russian State is silencing feminists who might otherwise provoke an Arab Spring-style revolution by pressuring them to exit the streets and return to their homes. The sentiment echoes Patriarch Kirill's instructions to eschew the public sphere and retreat to prayer within the home as discussed in the last chapter. Similarly, the State's focus on family integrity has redefined battering as an issue to be solved on the domestic level. The decline in feminist self-identity among employees of women's crisis centers noted above was a State-driven phenomenon:

> "The questionnaire results show that, as the crisis centers have become dominated by government agencies, the radical feminism that believed in women-only spaces is overwhelmed by a gender-neutral approach to domestic violence, one that sees the violence women face as part of family conflicts, not gender-based inequality." (Johnson 2013, 560-561)

Framing battering as a domestic issue leaves room for the victim to be blamed for her own attack. This tendency was noted by the remaining self-identified feminists in the crisis centers (557). While the Russian State is willing to tolerate this level of violence if the broader policy causing it successfully sparks a population spike, Pussy Riot issues an opposing call to "[f]ill up the city, all the squares, the streets" and revamp the country's

gender politics: “LGBT, feminists, defend the nation!" [“Заполните город, все площади, улицы,” “ЛГБТ, феминистки, защити отечество”] (Pussy Riot 2011)

Another aspect of “Liberate the Pavement” worth mentioning is its expression of solidarity with Yevgenia Chirikova. This grassroots environmental activist represents one of the very few prominent women in oppositionist political activism in Russia today. She has faced administrative difficulties registering to run in mayoral elections in the city of Khimki in 2009 (“Митволь: Чирикова”), and blames electoral violations by her opponents after losing the same race in 2011 (“Чирикова подала иск”). Her case is especially notable in this discussion for the fact that child protective services at one point threatened to take away her children, a move she attributes to her environmental work. Like the failure to grant leniency to Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova during sentencing because of their small children, Chirikova's case further testifies to the Russian government's willingness to threaten the welfare of children if it serves their other political priorities.

For all the ideological differences between Putin and Pussy Riot’s stance on gender relations, they do have one thing in common: both represent purported solutions to problems that will seriously impact the further development of Russian society. The extent to which they are diametrically opposed speaks to the desperation of each side to subdue the other. It is a radicalization of social views that is reflected in many areas of public life: the violence that pervades gay pride parades; the ultranationalist riots on Manezh’ Square in 2010; the spontaneous mass protests the winter thereafter. Since Putin’s return to the presidency, the government has passed a flurry of laws that work to

restrict some causal factor of these societal outbursts. Eventually, the escalation of both sides will likely reach a tipping point. Meanwhile, a new generation of Russians increasingly more embraces equal rights for men and women, and Putin's vital macho image is crumbling under allegations of Botox usage and his very real divorce (Weiner 2013) ("У Путина был синяк"). Keeping Russia penned into a patriarchal social and political framework seems to be more and more of an uphill battle. At the very least, as long as Putin continues tightening the screws, we can expect an increase in reactionary feminist retorts.

Conclusion

Having served nearly seventeen months in prison, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova was denied parole at her hearing in July 2013. The reason, as she puts it, is her refusal to partake in the prison's beauty pageant:

> So, if you are a woman, and the more so if you are young and even slightly attractive, then you are simply obligated to participate in beauty pageants. If you don't participate, they won't give you parole, on the basis that you ignored the "Miss Charm" event. Not participating means, according to the penal colony and echoed by this court, that you don't have a proactive attitude towards life.
>
> Так, если вы женщина, тем более молодая и хоть немного привлекательная, то вы просто обязаны участвовать в конкурсах красоты. Если участвовать не будете – не дадут УДО, сославшись на игнорирование вами мероприятия "Мисс очарование". Не участвуете – значит, по заключению колонии и вторящего ей суда, не имеете активной жизненной позиции. (Толоконникова 2013)

Thus, a self-identified radical feminist punk conceptual protest street artist is sentenced to two years in prison for performing a song condemning the nation's patriarch and patriarchy, in a location where women are banned, and the system in place to correct this behavior censures her for refusing to conform to the very gender stereotypes that her music rails against. A year and a half earlier, Pussy Riot gained notoriety by singing on Red Square about the dangers of "male hysteria," the cruelty of the Church, and the clinical conformity the Church proposes. Tolokonnikova's situation now is a surreal embodiment of her greatest enemies.

The persecution of Pussy Riot is not unique in Russian history. It is simply the latest iteration of a practice that rulers have been using for centuries to legitimize

themselves. Like cultural policy under any given leader, the execution of this case was tailored to fit the specific needs of Russia's current hybrid regime. Such a regime is unable to use overtly authoritarian tactics since it must maintain some modicum of a democratic veneer. The type of "soft repression" that Koshelev discusses is therefore a key tool in this scenario. The ability to harness the power of culture to socialize individuals is a much more subtle method of engineering a uniting ideology – and the conformity and consent that comes along with it – than tactics of sheer force. It is certainly less risky to legislate adherence to a doctrine of nationalism than it is to allow children to grow up watching dozens of nationalist films and form their own convictions, but if the latter is successful, the payoff is much higher.

The lingering hazards of Communist ideology tend to dominate the discussion of contemporary Russian bureaucratic mentalities. While the Cold War was a lived history for many analysts today, it can mask Russia's centuries-long preoccupation with Orthodox-based nationalism. To some extent, this sense of divine superiority continued to thrive during the Soviet years, with the regime simply putting aside the "divine" origins of this popular conviction. Robbed of the ideology he was raised under, Russia's deep-rooted religious nationalism was a natural choice for Putin to replace it with.

The brand of Orthodox nationalism that exists in Russia today is not the same as the one promoted during tsarist times. While the tsars' belief in the supremacy of their faith was genuine, the chance that Putin's own religious convictions are sincere to a similar extent is low. Even Soviet leaders, whose own sincere faith in communism is often questionable, had more of an ideological backbone than Putin does today. Thus,

whereas decisions in the cultural sphere during tsarist and Soviet times were made by top leaders to spread their ideologies for their own sake, Putin has exploited culture purely to advance his own policy prerogatives. Since his chosen ideology has such a popular historical basis, this exploitation has been easy to delegate: he has successfully enlisted the ROC, the Ministry of Culture, the Federal Corrections Service, and virtually all other branches of federal, and often local, government in this endeavor.

Rather than benefit the society as a whole, the substance of many of Putin's policies – on demographic decline, Church-State relations, arts funding, the battle against "extremism" – have proven socially divisive, and therefore a force of radicalization. Art groups like Voina and Pussy Riot, whose creative works border on the criminal, are the logical conclusion of this style of governance. After all, there is no "Putin Pissed Himself" if there is no Putin. In his persistent quest to extend his time in power, the third-term president is finding himself increasingly confronted with a society that has less and less tolerance for his authoritarian traits. If this trend continues, his need to employ cultural politics to self-legitimize is likely to grow. The Pussy Riot case is only the most recent example of a policy that Putin's government has been practicing since his first inauguration. It is simply the most visible because it has been the most extreme case of persecution during that time. If the Russian government continues to "tighten the screws" in the face of even an entity as derided and obscure as a group of feminist punks, continued cultural polarization and radicalization will likely be the result.

Works Cited

English-language sources

"57 Firms Registered to Christ the Savior Cathedral." (2013) *The Moscow Times*, available at: http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/57-firms-registered-to-christ-the-savior-cathedral/481033.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Anishchuk, Alexei. (2011) "Russian Finance Minister Kudrin ousted in power struggle." *Reuters India*, available at: http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/09/26/idINIndia-59554720110926, accessed 31 July 2013.

Attwood, Lynne. (1996) "Young People, sex, and sexual identity," in Hilary Pilkington, ed., *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia*. London: Routledge.

Balmforth, Tom. (2012) "Profile: Vladimir Medinsky, Russia's Controversial New Culture Minister." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-profile-culture-minister-vladimir-medinsky/24602133.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Barry, Ellen. (2011) "Putin Once More Moves to Assume Top Job in Russia." *The New York Times*, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/25/world/europe/medvedev-says-putin-will-seek-russian-presidency-in-2012.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all, accessed 31 July 2013.

Barry, Ellen. (2011) "Radical Art Group Wins Russian Ministry Prize." *The New York Times*, available at: www.nytimes.com/2011/04/09/world/europe/09russia.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Bennetts, Marc. (2012) "Archpriest Chaplin: Pussy Riot, Putin and God's Love." *RIA Novosti*, available at: http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20120725/174760458.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Besier, Gerhard & Hubert Seiwert, eds. (2012) "Freedom of Religion or Belief Anti-Sect Movements and State Neutrality - A Case Study: FECRIS." *Religion – Staat – Gesellschaft: Journal for the Study of Beliefs and Worldviews*. Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Bird, Robert, Sergei Zamascikov, Sabrina Petra Ramet. (1994) "The Soviet Rock Scene." *Rocking the State: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Blitt, Robert C. (2008) "How to Entrench a De Facto State Church in Russia: A Guide in Progress." *Brigham Young University Law Review*, 2008: 707-778.

Bova, Russell, ed. (2003) *Russia and Western Civilization: Cultural and Historical Encounters*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.

Brumfield, William Craft. (2004) *A History of Russian Architecture*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Bruno, Marta. (1996) "Employment and identities in the service sector," in Hilary Pilkington, ed., *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia*. London: Routledge.

Bryanski, Gleb. (2012) "Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill calls Putin era a 'miracle of God.'" *Reuters*, available at: http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2012/02/09/russian-orthodox-patriarch-kirill-calls-putin-era-a-miracle-of-god, accessed 31 July 2013.

Clark, Katerina, ed. (2007) *Soviet Culture and Power: A History in Documents, 1917-1953*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Clover, Charles. (2013) "Russia: Putin's hopes for a rising birth rate are not shared by experts." *Financial Times*, available at: http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/1dcce460-4ab6-11e2-9650-00144feab49a.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Coalson, Robert. (2008) "Does Putin, Like Lenin, See Film As 'Most Important Of The Arts'?" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/Putin_To_Head_Film_Council/1361814.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Čopič, Vesna. (2011) "Modernizing the Slovenian public cultural sector." *Cultural Policy Update,* 1.1: 12-20.

Conerly, Bill. (2013) "Oil Price Forecast for 2013-2014: Falling Prices." *Forbes*, available at: http://www.forbes.com/sites/billconerly/2013/05/01/oil-price-forecast-for-2013-2014-falling-prices/, accessed 31 July 2013.

Corwin, Julie. (2005) "Russia: Rock's Revolutionary Influence." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1059220.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Dahl, Robert. (1966) "Patterns of Opposition," in Robert Dahl, ed., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Davidashvili, Marina. (2013) "Putin's Russia: can the Orthodox church replace the communist party?" *Conscience*, 34.1: 26.

Elder, Miriam. (2012) “Hermitage instils shock of the new with contemporary art wing.” *The Guardian*, available at: http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2012/nov/28/hermitage-museum-contemporary-art-wing, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Excerpts from the Court Transcript.” (2013) *Pussy Riot! A Punk Prayer for Freedom*. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York.

Fitzgerald, Nora. (2010) “Russia's Forbidden Art.” *The Telegraph*, available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/rbth/culture/7902633/Russias-Forbidden-Art.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Foote, Paul. (2003) *Censorship Practice in Russia: Circulars of the Directorate of Censorship 1865 - 1904*. Unpublished paper presented at the Oxford-Princeton Partnership Conference: The History of Censorship, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

Frank, Joseph. (1986) *Dostoevsky: The Stir of Liberation, 1860-1865*, vol. 3. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Frisby, Tanya. (1989) “Soviet Youth Culture” in Jim Riordan, ed., Soviet Youth Culture. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Garrard, John & Carol Garrard. (2008) *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Geddes, Barbara. (2003) *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Gel’man, Vladimir. (2003) “Russia’s Elites in Search of Consensus: What Kind of Consolidation?” in Anton Steen & Vladimir Gel’man, eds., *Elites and Democratic Development in Russia*. London: Routledge.

Gel'man, Vladimir. (2005) “Political Opposition in Russia: A Dying Species?” *Post-Soviet Affairs,* 21.3: 226-46.

Gel'man, Vladimir. (2008) “Party Politics in Russia: From Competition to Hierarchy.” *Europe-Asia Studies,* 60.6: 913-30.

Glazov, Yuri. (1986) “Chaadaev and Russia's Destiny.” *Studies in Soviet Thought*, 32.4: 281-301.

Greenley, Andrew. (1994) “A Religious Revival in Russia?” *Journal for the Scientific*

Study of Religion, 33.3: 253-272.

Greene, Kenneth. (2007) "Creating Competition: Patronage Politics and the PRI's Demise." *Kellogg Institute Working Papers*, 345, available at: http://kellogg.nd.edu/publications/workingpapers/WPS/345.pdf, accessed 31 July 2013.

Hanna, Kathleen. (1991) "Riot Grrrl Manifesto." *Bikini Kill Zine 2.*

Hanson, Stephen. (2003) "Instrumental Democracy: The End of Ideology and the Decline of Russian Political Parties," in Hesli & Reisinger, eds., *The 1999 and 2000 Elections*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heino, Eveliina. (2012) "Concern Over the Future of the Nation – A Discourse Analytical Study on Changes in Russian Demographic Policy in the Years 2000–2010." *Finnish Yearbook of Population Research* XLVII: 65–88.

Higley, John, Oksan Bayulgen, & Julie George. (2003) "Political Elite Integration and Differentiation in Russia," in Anton Steen & Vladimir Gel'man, eds., *Elites and Democratic Development in Russia*. London: Routledge.

Hirschman, Albert O. (1970) *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

"IMF Upgrades Russia's 2012 GDP Growth to 4%." (2012) *RIA Novosti*, available at: http://en.ria.ru/business/20120417/172877919.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Johnson, Janet Elise & Aino Saarinen. (2013) "Twenty-First-Century Feminisms under Repression: Gender Regime Change and the Women's Crisis Center Movement in Russia." *Signs*, 38.3: 543-567.

Kengor, Paul. (2005) *God and George W. Bush: A Spiritual Life*. New York: ReganBooks.

"Kitsch art tribute to Vladimir Putin." (2012) *The Telegraph*, available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-news/9158577/Kitsch-art-tribute-to-Vladimir-Putin.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Lally, Kathy. (2012) "Russian woman honored in fight to save forest." *The Washington Post*, available at: http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-04-16/world/35453462_1_moscow-highway-project-kenyan-woman, accessed 31 July 2013.

Langston, Henry. (2012) “Meeting Pussy Riot.” *Vice*, available at: http://www.vice.com/read/A-Russian-Pussy-Riot, accessed on 31 July 2013.

Levin, Theodore. (1996) “Dmitri Pokrovsky and the Russian Folk Music Revival Movement” in Mark Slobin, ed., *Returning Culture: Musical Changes in Central and Eastern Europe*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Luzan, Vladimir S. (2009) “ Cultural Policy as a Self-Independent Type of State Policy.” *Журнал Сибирского федерального университета. Гуманитарные науки*, 2.4, available at: http://elib.sfu-kras.ru/handle/2311/1121.

Malinkin, Mary Elizabeth. (2011) “Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia.” *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*, available at: http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/russian-orthodoxy-resurgent-faith-and-power-the-new-russia, accessed 31 July 2013.

Mulcahy, Kevin V. (2006) “Cultural Policy: Definitions and Theoretical Approaches.” *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, 35:4: 319-330.

Parthé, Kathleen. (2004) *Russia's Dangerous Texts: Politics Between the Lines*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Peterson, Dale E. (1997) “Civilizing the Race: Chaadaev and the Paradox of Eurocentric Nationalism.” *Russian Review*, 56.4: 550-563.

Pilkington, Hilary. (1994) *Russia's Youth and its Culture: A nation's constructors and constructed*. London: Routledge.

Pilkington, Hilary. (1998) “’The Future is Ours’: Youth Culture in Russia, 1953 to the Present” in Catriona Kelly & David Shepherd, eds., *Russian Cultural Studies: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Polozov, Nikolay. (2012) “Closing Statement by Defense Attorney Nikolay Polozov.” *Pussy Riot! A Punk Prayer for Freedom*. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2013.

Pryde, Ian. (2012) “Medvedev's address: nice words, little action.” *Russia and India Report*, available at: http://indrus.in/articles/2012/04/26/medvedevs_address_nice_words_little_action_15408.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Ramet, Sabrina Petra, Sergei Zamascikov & Robert Bird. (1994) “The Soviet Rock

Scene" in Sabrina Petra Ramet, ed., *Rocking the State: Rock Music and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Robertson, Graeme B. (2011) *The Politics of Protest in Hybrid Regimes: Managing Dissent in Post-Communist Russia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Rotkirch, Anna, Anna Temkina & Elena Zdravomyslova (2007) "Who Helps the Degraded Housewife?: Comments on Vladimir Putin's Demographic Speech." *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 14.4: 349-357.

"Russian Economy's Dependence on Oil Might Have Negative Consequences — Kudrin." (2012) *Interfax*, available at: http://russialist.org/russia-economy-oil-negative-consequences-kudrin-754.php, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Russian Patriarch Votes For 'Stability.'" (2012) *RIA Novosti*, available at: http://en.rian.ru/russia/20120304/171715116.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Salmenniemi, Suvi. (2008) *Democratization and Gender in Contemporary Russia*. Oxon: Routledge.

Sandler, Stephanie. (1983) "The Poetics of Authority in Pushkin's 'André Chénier.'" *Slavic Review*, 42.2: 187-203.

Service, Robert. (2004) *Stalin: A Biography*. Oxford: Macmillan.

Shein, Louis J. (1968) "Pushkin's Political Weltanschauung." *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 10.1: 68-78.

"Sobyanin Calls for Tougher Laws Against Illegal Migrants." (2013) *The Moscow Times*, available at: http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/sobyanin-calls-for-tougher-laws-against-illegal-migrants/481568.html

Stites, Richard. (1993) *Russian Popular Culture: Entertainment and Society Since 1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

"Supporting the arts in spinning times." (2011) *Cultural Policy Update,* 1.1: 2.

Svetliakov, Kirill. (2012) "Arseniy Zhilyaev's Museum of Proletarian Culture and the politics of art museums today." Государственная Третьяковская Галерея на Крымсом Валу. 117049, г. Москва, Крымский Вал, 10. 19 July 2012.

Tartakovskaia, Irina. (1996) "Women's career patterns in industry," in Hilary Pilkington, ed., *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia*. London: Routledge.

Timchenko, Marina. (1992) “Transition: The State of Contemporary Artistic Culture.” Trans. Andrew Wachtel. *Re-Entering the Sign: Articulating the New Russian Culture*. Ed. Berry E. Ellen and Anesa Miller-Pogacar. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995. 129-43.

Van Gorp, Jasmijn. (2011) “Inverting film policy: film as nation builder in post-Soviet Russia, 1991-2005.” *Media, Culture, & Society*, 33.2: 243–58.

Vats, Vaibhav. (2009) “Intellectuals discuss ‘cultural policy.’“ *The Indian Express*, available at: http://www.indianexpress.com/news/intellectuals-discuss--cultural-policy-/492365, accessed 31 July 2013.

Watson, Ian. (2012) “Cultural policy in South Korea: reinforcing homogeneity and cosmetic difference?” *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 5.1: 97-116.

Watson, Peggy. (1993) “Eastern Europe's Silent Revolution: Gender.” *Sociology*, 27.3: 471-487.

Weiner, Juli. (2013) "Vladimir Putin’s Face Appears to Contain More Botulism Than Drug-Store Sushi." Vanity Fair, available at: http://www.vanityfair.com/online/daily/2013/06/vladimir-putin-s-face-appears-to-contain-more-botulism-than-drug-store-sushi, accessed 31 July 2013.

White, Gregory L. (2012) “Medvedev Promises More Russian Freedom.” *The Wall Street Journal*, available at: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303592404577363730769868286.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Whitmore, Brian. (2011) “With Popularity Fading, United Russia Tries To Get Sexy.” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/with_popularity_fading_united_russia_tries_to_get_sexy/24386084.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Whitmore, Brian. (2012a) “The Unraveling: The Tandem's Slow Death.” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/how_the_tandem_disintegrated/24535389.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Whitmore, Brian. (2012b) “The End Of The Party.” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/the_end_of_the_party/24560247.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Wilkerson, Michael. (2012) “Using the Arts to Pay for the Arts: A Proposed New Public Funding Model.” *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, 42.3, 102-115.

Young, Cathy. (2013) “Putin goes to church: Russia's unholy new alliance between Orthodox and state.” *Reason*, 44.8: 40.

Zubok, Vladislav. (2009) *Zhivago’s Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia.* Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Russian-language sources

“2013: Культурная политика.” (2013) *Эхо Москвы*, available at: http://www.echo.msk.ru/programs/year2013/1012030-echo/, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Авдеев рассказал, чем займется после отставки, как его назначали и назвал деятелей культуры 'нервными вампирами.'“ (2012) *Newsru.com*, available at: www.newsru.com/cinema/07apr2012/avdeev.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Алехина, Мария. (2012) “Заявление - к обвинению.” *Эхо Москвы*, available at: http://echo.msk.ru/blog/alekhina/914624-echo/, accessed 31 July 2013.

Андреев, В.Г. (2012) УМВД России по г. Чебоксары. “Рапорт,” available at http://news2.ru/story/352174/comment1053738/, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Арсений Жиляев. Музей пролетарской культуры. Индустриализация богемы.” (2012) *Государственная Третьяковская галерея*, available at: http://www.tretyakovgallery.ru/ru/calendar/exhibitions/exhibitions3769, accessed 31 July 2013.

Астафьева, Ольга Николаевна. (2011) “Культурная политика: теоретическое понятие и управленческая деятельность (Лекции 6–8).” *Культурологический журнал*, available at: http://www.cr-journal.ru/files/file/09_2011_23_22_51_1316632971.pdf, accessed 31 July 2013.

“В Воронеже арестован художник, написавший портрет Путина в женском платье.” (2009) *Newsru.com*, available at: http://www.newsru.com/russia/16jun2009/shurik.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“В Чувашии активисту «Другой России», чихнувшему на портрет Путина, дали 15 суток.” (2012) *Газета.ru*, available at: http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2012/05/30/n_2365781.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

vilana1973. (2010) “спич Шевчука.MOD.” *YouTube*, available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrpoFzBbyMU, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Влияют ли религиозные предпочтения чиновников Минюста на положение религиозных организаций?” (2013) *Сова информационно-аналитический центр*, available at: http://www.sova-center.ru/religion/discussions/authorities/2013/05/d27078/, accessed 31 July 2013.

Востряков, Лев Евгеньевич. (2004) “ Культурная политика: концепции, понятия, модели.” Материал семинара “Культура на границах", 18-21 марта 2004, Москва, Ясная Поляна, available at: http://www.cpolicy.ru/analytics/80.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Группа Pussy Riot. (2011) “Почему феминистский хлыст полезен России?” *Грани.Ру*, available at: http://grani.ru/blogs/free/entries/192925.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Guelman, Marat. (2013, June 18) “только что позвонил Гладнев и подтвердил факт увольнения. Министр культуры закрывающий выставки видимо перепутал свою должность с ФСБ [Twitter post], available at: https://twitter.com/galerist/status/347246602794201089, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Дело группы «Война».” (2012) *Мемориал*, available at: http://www.memo.ru/d/2828.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Дело №1-170/12.” Court verdict. Moscow, Russian Federation, August 17, 2012, available at: http://www.snob.ru/selected/entry/51999, accessed 31 July 2013.

Дубин, Борис et. al., eds. (2011) *Вестник общественного мнения: Данные. Анализ. Дискуссии*, 2.108, Аналитический Центр Юрия Левады (Левада-Центр) & Междисциплинарный академический центр социальных наук (Интерцентр).

Жирков, Геннадий Васильевич. (2001) *История цензуры в России XIX-XX вв*. Москва: Аспект Пресс.

“Заявление Высшего Церковного Совета Русской Православной Церкви в связи с судебным приговором по делу лиц, осквернивших священное пространство Храма Христа Спасителя.” (2012) *Русская Православная Церковь*, available at: http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2411921.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Заявление Союза православных женщин против феминизма." (2012) *Русская Православная Церковь*, available at: http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2097594.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Игорь Гладнев объявил о решении расторгнуть срочный трудовой договор с директором музея PERMM Маратом Гельманом." (2013) *DayPerm.ru*, available at: http://www.dayperm.ru/node/58759, accessed 31 July 2013.

"История Союза Комитетов Солдатских Матерей России." *Союз комитетов солдатских матерей России*, available at: http://www.ucsmr.ru/ucsmr/history.htm, accessed 31 July 2013.

Карев. Игорь. (2013) "Пермь лишили Гельмана." *Газета.ru*, available at: http://www.gazeta.ru/culture/2013/06/19/a_5386125.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

Кашин, Олег. (2005) "Как я не стал предателем." *Афиша*, available at: http://www.afisha.ru/article/naim_v_nashi, accessed 31 July 2013.

Кашин, Олег. (2009) "Щит и миф." *Коммерсантъ*, available at: http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1116086, accessed 31 July 2013.

Кобяк, Н.А., "Списки отреченных книг." *Института русской литературы (Пушкинского Дома) РАН*, available at: http://www.pushkinskijdom.ru/Default.aspx?tabid=4646, accessed 31 July 2013.

Копелевич, Илья. (2013) "Владимир Мединский: «Мы хобби оплачивать не будем»." *Business FM*, available at: http://www.bfm.ru/news/222130, accessed 31 July 2013.

Лермонтов, Михаил Юрьевич. (1837) "Смерть поэта." *Стихотворение: Герой нашего времени*. Москва: Издательство "Детская литература," 1968.

Лотман, Юрий Михайлович. "Отношение Пушкина к власти." *Электронная библиотека по русской литературе XIX века*, available at: http://www.ruslibrary.ru/default.asp?trID=432, accessed 31 July 2013.

Lun, Dina. (2012) "Pussy Riot: Искусство или политика?" *Look at Me*, available at: http://www.lookatme.ru/mag/experience/experience-interview/159845-hlystom-i-pryanikom, accessed 31 July 2013.

Лютова, Ксения Владимировна. (1999) *Спецхран Библиотеки Академии наук: из истории секретных фондов.* Санкт-Петербург: Издательский отдель Библиотеки Академии наук.

Макаревич, Андрей. (2010) "Я встречался с Медведевым." *Сноб*, available at: http://www.snob.ru/profile/5134/blog/25442, accessed 31 July 2013.

Масюк, Елена. (2012) “Михаил АНШАКОВ, председатель Общества защиты прав потребителей: Храм Христа Спасителя превратили в бизнес-центр, где торговля не подчиняется законам. А когда мы об этом заявили, нас обвинили в клевете.” *Новая газета*, available at: http://www.novayagazeta.ru/politics/54541.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Митволь: Чирикова восстановлена на выборах в Химках.” (2009) *Грани.Ру*, available at: http://grani.ru/Politics/Russia/Election/m.146926.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Министр культуры заступился за студентов и культурное наследие РФ.” (2011) *РИА Новости*, available at: http://ria.ru/culture/20110120/323835472.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Министр культуры России выступил против ‘Охта-центра.’” (2009) *BBC Русская служба*, available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/russia/2009/10/091008_petersburg_skyscraper_avdeyev.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Минкульт по поводу премии ‘Войне’: Мы - не цензурный орган.” (2011) *Фонтанка.ру*, available at: http://www.fontanka.ru/2011/04/13/023, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Михалков: я бы заставил Pussy Riot сделать то же самое в Мекке и у Стены плача.” (2012) *Вести*, available at: http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=835110, accessed 31 July 2013.

Морозов, Владимир. (2013) “Многоконфессиональный Минюст.” *ReligioPolis Центр религиоведческих исследований*, available at: http://www.religiopolis.org/publications/6260-monokonfessionalnyj-minjust.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“На выставке Гельмана ищут экстремизм.” (2013) *Интерфакс*, available at: http://www.interfax.ru/russia/txt.asp?id=313897, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Национальная программа демографического развития России.” (2006) *Российская Газета*, available at: http://www.rg.ru/2006/05/26/demografiya-proekt.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Неверов: 1 мая для нас является символом единства.” (2012) *Партия «Единая Россия»*, available at: http://er.ru/news/2012/5/1/neverov-1-maya-dlya-nas-yavlyaetsya-simvolom-edinstva, accessed 31 July 2013.

Нестеров, Леонид. (2012) “Путин о Pussy Riot.” *YouTube*, available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaUwM3eScyw, accessed 31 July 2013.

niknikolay. (2010) “В.Путин VS Ю.Шевчук. 29.05.10 V.Putin VS Y.Shevchuk.” *YouTube*, available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7ZMeCBmoe8, accessed 31 July 2013.

Панюшкин, Валерий. (2009) “'наш президент умрет' или с кем вы, мастера 'Культуры.'“ *LiveJournal*, available at: http://v-panyushkin.livejournal.com/5295.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Патриарх Алексий II снялся в рекламном ролике «ЛУКОЙЛа».” (2001) *Коммерсантъ*, available at: http://www.kommersant.ru/news/927914, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Патриарх Кирилл о протестах: православные не ходят на демонстрации, они молятся в тиши монастырей.” (2012) *Газета.ru*, available at: http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2012/02/01/n_2187809.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Патриарх Кирилл предложил Владимиру Путину подумать о коррекции курса.” (2012) *Накануне.ru*, available at: http://www.nakanune.ru/news/2012/02/02/22261878, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Первое впечатление россиян от приговора по делу Кировлеса.” (2013) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/26-07-2013/pervoe-vpechatlenie-rossiyan-ot-prigovora-po-delu-kirovlesa, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Первый всесоюзный съезд советских писателей.” (1934). Стенографический отчет. Москва.

“Познер: законопроект о защите чувств верующих 'чреват последствиями.'“ (2013) *РИА Новости*, available at: http://ria.ru/society/20130414/932585623.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Положение о Министерстве культуры Российской Федерации.” (2012) *Официальный сайт Министерства культуры Российской Федерации*, available at: http://mkrf.ru/ministerstvo/index.php, accessed 31 July 2013.

Помещиков, Антон & Алексей Мунипов. (2005) “Владислав Сурков познакомился с монстрами рока.” *Известия*, available at: http://izvestia.ru/news/301073, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Принудительное крещение детей в лагере..flv.” (2012) *YouTube*, available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBGhtpD9PLA, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Проект списка «100 фильмов».” (2013) *Официальный сайт Министерства культуры Российской Федерации*, available at: http://mkrf.ru/press-tsentr/novosti/spisok.php?sphrase_id=1338966, accessed 31 July 2013.

Пушкин, Александр Сергеевич. (1828) "Друзьям." Викитека, available at: http://ru.wikisource.org/wiki/Друзьям_(Нет,_я_не_льстец_—_Пушкин), accessed 31 July 2013.

Pussy Riot. (2011) “НЕЛЕГАЛЬНЫЙ КОНЦЕРТ ГРУППЫ PUSSY RIOT НА КРЫШЕ ТЮРЬМЫ.” *Блог феминистской панк-группы “Pussy Riot,”* available at: http://pussy-riot.livejournal.com/5763.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Pussy Riot. (2012a) “ПАНК-МОЛЕБЕН ‘БОГОРОДИЦА, ПУТИНА ПРОГОНИ’ В ХРАМЕ ХРИСТА СПАСИТЕЛЯ.” *Блог феминистской панк-группы “Pussy Riot,”* available at: http://pussy-riot.livejournal.com/12442.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Pussy Riot. (2012b) “ПРОРЫВ И АРЕСТ PUSSY RIOT НА ЛОБНОМ МЕСТЕ КРАСНОЙ ПЛОЩАДИ С ПЕСНЕЙ ‘ПУТИН ЗАССАЛ.’“ *Блог феминистской панк-группы “Pussy Riot,”* available at: http://pussy-riot.livejournal.com/8459.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Pussy Riot. (2012c) “СЕРИЯ ВЫСТУПЛЕНИЙ ФЕМИНИСТСКОЙ ПАНК-ГРУППЫ PUSSY RIOT В МОСКВЕ.” *Блог феминистской панк-группы “Pussy Riot,”* available at: http://pussy-riot.livejournal.com/5497.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Пусть говорят. Бесы.” (2012) *Первый канал*, available at: http://www.1tv.ru/videoarchive/44697&p=375, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Путин: мать крестила меня втайне от отца." (2013) *BBC Русская служба*, available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/rolling_news/2013/07/130722_rn_putin_secretly_baptised.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

Пушкин, Александр Сергеевич. (1833–1835) “Путешествие из Москвы в Петербург.” *Собрание сочинений в десяти томах*. Русская виртуальная библиотека, available at: http://rvb.ru/pushkin/01text/07criticism/02misc/1050.htm, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Резолюция Николай I на докладной записке Бенкендорфа.” (1959) Цит. по Лермонтов и Николай I. Литературная газета, 126.

"Религиозная вера в России." (2011) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/26-09-2011/religioznaya-vera-v-rossii, accessed 31 July 2013.

"речь Юрия Арабова на вручении премии «Ника» 2013." (2013) *YouTube*, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7syJOCioHE, accessed 31 July 2013.

Рискин, Андрей & Светлана Гамзаева. (2006) "Православный, неженатый, спортивный." *Независимая газета*, available at: http://www.ng.ru/ngregions/2006-10-16/13_pravoslavnyi.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Рожкова, Наталья. (2011) "Женщин в политике быть не должно." *Московские Новости*, available at: http://www.mn.ru/politics/20110721/303428692.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Российским женщинам не угнаться за Forbes." (2009) *Балтийское информационное агенство*, available at: http://www.baltinfo.ru/2009/08/20/Rossiiskim-zhenschinam-ne-ugnatsya-za-Forbes-100473, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Россияне о деле Pussy Riot." (2012) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/31-07-2012/rossiyane-o-dele-pussy-riot, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Россияне о Pussy Riot и церкви." (2013) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/20-05-2013/rossiyane-o-pussy-riot-i-tserkvi, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Россияне об ОНФ и ЕР" (2013) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/09-07-2013/rossiyane-ob-onf-i-er, accessed 31 July 2013.

Ротанова, Татьяна & Дмитрий Тихонов. (2013) "Михаил Аншаков оштрафован на 100 тысяч рублей." *Коммерсантъ*, available at: http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2191910, accessed 31 July 2013.

"РПЦ просит отпустить Pussy Riot из-под стражи: вместо реального срока нужно общественное осуждение." (2012) *Газета.ru*, available at: http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2012/03/07/n_2232661.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

Сарнов, Бенедикт. (2008) *Сталин и писатели: книга вторая*. Москва: Эксмо.

"Святейший Патриарх Алексий поздравил сотрудников ОАО «ЛУКОЙЛ" с 15-летием компании." (2006) *Русская Православная Церковь*, available at: http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/159016.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Святейший Патриарх Кирилл: У нас нет будущего, если мы начинаем глумиться перед великими святынями." (2012) *Русская Православная Церковь*, available at: http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/2101850.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Стравинская, Майя. (2007) "Православные просят уволить директора Третьяковки." *Коммерсантъ*, available at: http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/830710, accessed 31 July 2013.

Сурков, Владислав. (2006) " Суверенитет – это политический синоним конкурентоспособности." Центр партийной учебы и подготовки кадров ВПП "Единая Россия." 7 Feb. 2006, available at: http://www.intelros.org/lib/doklady/surkov1.htm. Speech transcript.

Таратута, Юлия. (2012) "Всеволод Чаплин: Мы встречались с Навальным, но не планировали заговор." *Телеканал ДОЖДЬ*, available at: http://tvrain.ru/articles/vsevolod_chaplin_my_vstrechalis_s_navalnym_no_ne_planirovali_zagovor-177806/, accessed 31 July 2013.

Техномад. (2010) "Группа Война: «Мы ёбнем власть томиком Салтыкова-Щедрина – и она сдохнет!»." *LiveJournal*, available at: http://teh-nomad.livejournal.com/685627.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Три года Александра Авдеева: поделить, сохранить, раздать, достроить." (2011) *РИА Новости*, available at: http://ria.ru/culture/20110512/373197464.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Толоконникова, Надежда. (2012a) "Письмо Н. Толоконниковой от 03/04/2012: К месяцу в заключении." *Free Pussy Riot*, available at: http://freepussyriot.org/ru/content/письмо-н-толоконниковой-от-03042012-к-месяцу-в-заключении, accessed 31 July 2013.

Толоконникова, Надежда. (2012b) "Письмо Н. Толоконниковой от 05/04/2012." *Free Pussy Riot*, available at: http://freepussyriot.org/ru/content/письмо-н-толоконниковой-от-05042012, accessed 31 July 2013.

Толоконникова, Надежда. (2013) "'Я горжусь всеми, кто готов отстаивать свои принципы.'" *Радио свобода*, available at: http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/25057873.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Треть россиян верит в честный суд над Pussy Riot." (2012) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/17-08-2012/tret-rossiyan-verit-v-chestnyi-sud-nad-pussy-riot, accessed 31 July 2013.

Троицкий, Артемий. (2005) “БГ и ГБ.” *Новая газета*, available at: http://2005.novayagazeta.ru/nomer/2005/24n/n24n-s31.shtml, accessed 31 July 2013.

“У Путина был синяк из-за укола ботокса?"” (2010) *Сегодня.ua*, available at: http://www.segodnya.ua/politics/power/u-putina-byl-cinjak-iz-za-ukola-botokca.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“У российской культуры появится политика?” (2012) *The Art Newspaper Russia*, no. 3-4, June-August, p. 18.

“Федеральный закон Российской Федерации от 29 июня 2013 г. N 136-ФЗ г. Москва.” *Российская газета*, available at: http://www.rg.ru/2013/06/30/zashita-site-dok.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Фейгин, Марк. (2012a) “Вторая экспертиза ГУП “ЦИАТ” по делу PUSSY RIOT.” *LiveJournal*, available at: http://mark-feygin.livejournal.com/93621.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Фейгин, Марк. (2012b) “Экспертиза Троицкого-Абраменковой-Понкина по 'делу PUSSY RIOT."“ *LiveJournal*, available at: http://mark-feygin.livejournal.com/89127.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Филатов, Сергей Борисович & Роман Николаевич Лункин. (2005) “Статистика Российской религиозности: магия цифр и неоднозначная раельность. *Социологические исследования*, 6, 35-45.

“Цензура от Путина и Медведева.” (2010) *Ежедневные новости Владивостока*, available at: http://novostivl.ru/msg/11905.htm, accessed 31 July 2013.

Чехонадских, Мария. (2012) “Музей пролетарской кульутры. Индустриализация богемы.” Государственная Третьяковская Галерея на Крымсом Валу. 117049, г. Москва, Крымский Вал, 10. 19 July 2012.

“Чирикова подала иск по нарушениям на выборах мэра Химок.” *Росбалт*, available at: http://www.rosbalt.ru/moscow/2012/10/14/1045897.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Шевчука не позвали на встречу с Медведевым, потому что он уже высказал свою 'подростковую позицию."“ (2010) *Newsru.com*, available at: http://www.newsru.com/russia/13oct2010/medvedev.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

“Эксперта по делу Pussy Riot уличили в дружбе с адвокатом потерпевших.” (2012) *Lenta.ru*, available at: http://lenta.ru/news/2012/08/06/riot2, accessed 31 July 2013.

"Электоральные рейтинги партий и ОНФ." (2013) *Левада-центр*, available at: http://www.levada.ru/25-07-2013/elektoralnye-reitingi-partii-i-onf, accessed 31 July 2013.

Ярошевская, Татьяна Львовна. (2009) "Культурная политика современной России." *Глобальный экономический кризис: реалии и пути преодоления*. Санкт-Петербург: Институт бизнеса и права, available at: http://www.ibl.ru/konf/031209/120.html, accessed 31 July 2013.

Georgian-language sources

მახობეშვილი, გიორგი. "სტალინი - პოეზიიდან დიქტატურამდე." Presa.ge, available at: http://presa.ge/new/?m=lit&AID=11972, accessed 31 July 2013.